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TRAVELS IN BOLIVIA;

WITH A

TOUR ACROSS THE PAMPAS

TO

BUENOS AYRES, &c.

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BY

L. HUGH DE BONELLI,

OF HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S LEGATION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TRAVELS IN BOLIVIA.

CHAPTER I.

Oruro—Machacamarca—Poopo—Huancani—Disastrous night on the road—Ancacato.

THE town of Caracollo covers more ground than is usually the case in those of its class. Its appearance is remarkably good, containing, as it does, a spacious Plaza, in which are a number of small shops where most necessaries are procurable. At one side stands the church, an inelegant and clumsy building. The streets, which are of a decent width, are composed of houses of but one story, and, as far as I could judge, sufficiently

commodious for the character of the place. The post I found much superior to the generality of buildings of this description. On presenting myself, I was told that all the rooms were already engaged; the principal saloon being occupied by the wife and daughters of a General of the Republic, who, with a retinue of servants, were on their way to La Paz. This circumstance precluding all intrusion, I immediately asked for an interview with the master of the post, and ordered him to hire me a room out of the building.

He soon complied with my request; and on being introduced to my apartment I found that I was to be located in a small hut of one room,—snug enough, it is true, had it not been more than half filled with wheat, as well as cocks, hens, and pigs, who seemed to dispute my possession of what they had hitherto regarded as their exclusive domain. I set to work, with two Indians, and turned them all out; made a good meal of some excellent *chupe* and a broiled leg of lamb, which I washed down with a cup of first-rate Hong Kong, and then went to sleep, as happy as a king. It is said that "Misery makes us

acquainted with strange bedfellows,"—so, in fact, does travelling; but I speak from experience when I say, that there is something agreeably exciting in anticipating the novelties of the morrow, when one has once become reconciled to the strange discomforts which travellers have to expect. At this place I parted with my Argentine friends, whose road here struck off in a different direction from mine, and, having no option in the matter, I was under the necessity of joining my two former companions; so, putting as good a face upon it as I could, we all started off together in tolerably good fellowship.

The morning was bright and exhilarating, its influence on my bodily frame being very evident from my unusually elated and buoyant spirits. Trotting cheerfully along under the brilliant rays of the morning sun, which had just then shone forth, and by his magic touch was making everything, as it were, start again into new existence, we entered upon a vast plain, carpeted with a yellow stunted grass, but otherwise devoid of verdure; and all this owing to the presence of beds of

saltpetre, with which the whole land far and near is impregnated. Attracted, no doubt, by this saline earth, thousands of doves take up their residence here; and, their plumage resembling the ground in colour, they are not perceived till the clatter of the mule's hoofs startles them from their hiding-place, and sets them fluttering in all directions. Then down they fly under the feet of your mules, showing a decided reluctance to get out of the path, as they rush madly into the way of danger. Passing near a large, shallow piece of water, literally covered with all sorts of wild-fowl, including widgeon, teal, snipes, ducks, and geese,—which, from their extraordinary size, I at first took to be swans—the road is coasted on one side by a range of hills, which mark the vicinity of Oruro. The plain on the other side is relieved of its otherwise barren aspect by the church of some picturesque Indian village, and several fields exhibiting the well-directed labour of the husbandman. After this, Indian cottages and little verdant patches, where cattle and sheep are occasionally seen grazing, occur frequently, showing plainly

the approach to a large town, or capital of a department.

The plains of Oruro are noted for being almost daily visited by hurricanes and whirlwinds, which sweep over the ground with dreadful fury, raising into the air columns of dust to an incredible height. So great is the force of the wind upon these occasions as to carry everything before it; and stories are related of mules and their riders being overthrown, and man and beast much injured, during the prevalence of these hurricanes.

The approach to Oruro is one of the most miserable it is possible to conceive. The houses, which are to be seen on both sides of the road, are in a most dilapidated condition, some even without roofs, others mere half-finished huts, but all presenting a most ruinous appearance. As one advances towards the centre of the town, things begin to assume a better aspect. The streets are formed of houses of one story, exhibiting a clean and comfortable exterior, and holding out some promise of an agreeable welcome to the weary traveller. I took up my quarters at the "Sun," the sign of the *fonda*, or

hotel, which is kept by a man of the name of Brown, of English extraction, I believe, though an Argentine. I found him a jolly sort of host, and willing to do all in his power to render me comfortable. The sleeping-rooms are excellent, containing everything necessary in the way of furniture, the walls being covered with an elegant French paper. There are two very great essentials in which Oruro is deficient, and those are, provisions and water. The latter is sold at a very dear rate, and ladled out with the strictest regard to economy. As to provisions, they can scarcely be purchased at any cost, for the landlord had the greatest difficulty in procuring me even a very ordinary dinner, which, not being over-delicate, and having come provided with a pretty good share of appetite, I enjoyed as much as if it had consisted of the most sumptuous fare.

Why the town should be so badly off, in the matter of food, I cannot imagine; for there is plenty of wild-fowl in the neighbourhood, which only require shooting; and I saw no reason to think that the fertility of the surrounding country was incommensurate

with the population of the place. In the principal Plaza (for there are two) stands, as usual, the cathedral and a number of shops. The principal feature, however, of the town is the *Fortaleza*, the grand *depôt* of ammunition and military stores belonging to the Republic. The building is of a very mediocre character, consisting merely of a quadrangular mud fort, in which are mounted a number of beautiful Spanish brass guns, which would, I fear, if discharged, shake the edifice to pieces. The engineer officers, who constructed this fortification, must have known but little of their profession, for its position is so low that it is commanded by a number of adjacent hills. It could, therefore, be of no manner of use, for a few shells from a 13-inch mortar would untenant it in a moment, even if the concussion did not crumble the whole affair to atoms.

The post here is the worst and the most ill-supplied that I met with on the road, particularly in regard to mules. On making application, I found that there was not a single mule in the whole of the establishment; and had I not fortunately secured one

of a batch that returned soon after my arrival, I might have had to remain many days before I had another chance of finding one. I considered myself lucky in not being detained, as I understood had been the case with many previous travellers, from this scarcity of animals.

Having to present my passport, according to usage, to the *Intendente de Policia*, I discovered the said official to be a friend of mine, whom I had known at La Paz. He was overjoyed at seeing me, and insisted on my remaining and taking coffee with him in the evening. This I consented to do; and had the gratification of meeting with his daughter, a beautiful dark-eyed girl, who pressed me so much to give her a sample of my performance on a guitar which she put into my hands, that I could not refuse, and executed a favourite air from an opera, to the satisfaction of my small audience. This trifling act of complaisance on my part, and the gift of a few cigars to the old gentleman, who was a most enthusiastic *connoisseur* in the art of smoking, had made my visit so agreeable, that so far from sympathizing with

me in my complaint of the difficulty of procuring mules, they only regretted that any were to be found, and wished that my visit to Oruro could have been prolonged beyond the morrow. This was impossible; my arrangements had been completed, and early in the morning I started across the plain in front of the fort, arriving, at last, at a number of yellow sand-hills, the particles of which are of such a very fine description, that in those diurnal tempests which agitate the country around, they are put in motion and scattered all over the plain, occasionally burying animals with their baggage under an impenetrable shroud.

Leaving these, the plain partially recovers its yellow stunted grass, and occasionally a few dwellings, with patches of cultivated ground, are seen. All at once you find yourself in the bed of a large river, where, in the dry season, are several small rivulets, in which ducks and wild-fowl might be seen basking in the sun. After gaining the opposite bank, and, at a slight distance from it, the post of Machacamarca appears in sight. Having arrived within the enclosed court-

yard, I selected my apartment, and proceeded to unload my luggage, permitting my black cook to occupy one corner of the room, as she stood in dread of my two suspicious companions, who were in our rear. They soon made their appearance, and took possession of the adjoining apartment, which was separated from ours merely by a mud-wall, which did not reach quite so far as the roof, so that utter privacy was entirely out of the question.

After having made a hearty dinner, I was smoking a cigar on the earthen bench at the door of the building, when out started Mr. Bootmaker and his companion through the archway, in a tremendous hurry. I felt a little surprised at the manœuvre, but pretended to take no notice of it; however, during the interval of their absence, I secured a brace of pistols and awaited the sequel.

In a very short time they returned, accompanied by three or four others, as cut-throat a party as ever I beheld. One, a black, a very ill-looking fellow, two Gauchos, and a Cholo youth—all armed with knives a foot and a half long; on alighting from their

steeds, they saluted me slightly, an act of condescension which I appeared little to regard, and then commenced blustering and bullying the inmates of the post for *cebada* to give to their animals. Fortunately the postmaster and postilions at this place were of a superior class to any I had previously met; fine-looking, powerful men, well dressed with European trousers and belts, in which were stuck formidable knives, contrary to the general usuage of the poor timid aborigines of the country. These Indians, probably not liking the appearance of their customers, demanded payment before executing their orders. This was the signal for a general row. However, the Indians stood firm, and gained their point, which gave me much confidence, as I foresaw that if any foul play were attempted during the night, we were in a position to muster a strong party to defend ourselves.

When tranquillity was restored, I placed a pitcher at some twenty paces distance, and taking my pistols, amused myself by breaking it to pieces. This feat, I perceived, gave great delight to my Indian allies. Certain

signs took place between us, which assured me of their friendly inclinations. They began to be more attentive to me than ever, leaving the other party to get on as best they could. Feeling convinced that in the event of their proceeding to violence, we should be easily able to overpower them, I retired to my apartment, placing my luggage against the door, in order to secure it; and after the fatigues of the day, soon fell asleep. Not so my poor black cook, who sat crouched in the corner of the room, and trembling with fear the whole of the night; not being able to close her eyes, as she told me in the morning, from the continued whisperings she heard in the adjoining apartment. She had gathered enough of the purport of the conversation that was being carried on, to be a complete justification of her alarms.

It appeared that these suspicious travellers who had so much courted my society, were possessed with the idea that I carried a large sum of money about me, and they were concocting a plan for easing me of it. Different modes of attack were suggested. Some proposed to scale the wall, others to force the

door; but on the bootmaker interposing, and stating that I was well armed, and certain to kill, or at least wound some one or other of them, their courage seemed to fail. He further urged that their previous dispute with the Indians would make them all take my part, and their proximity to Oruro, where the *intendente*, being my friend, would set on foot a vigorous pursuit, must necessarily ensure any of the party, who escaped from the fray unhurt, being ultimately taken; this argument appeared to all of them conclusive. They determined to defer the attack to some more fitting opportunity, hoping to gain their end at some lonely post, whence they could strike into the woods, and so in a very short time elude all pursuit. In some of these sequestered spots murders are repeatedly committed upon travellers, the assassins avoiding all towns and habitations till they arrive at the *Despoblado*, those vast and desert tracts, lying between Bolivia and the Argentine provinces. Thus many a poor unfortunate traveller is waylaid, without his friends or relations being able to receive further tidings of him, or ascer-

tain the slightest circumstance respecting his fate.

Early in the morning, as I was preparing to depart, my hangers on, who would have robbed me if they could, came to me with all the coolness imaginable, and offered me their services, should I in any way require them. Of course I politely declined their proffered kindness, particularly as I was furnished with two sturdy postilions and the voluntary escort of the master of the post, mounted on a good strong horse. They then requested to know where I should sleep on the following night, to which I replied, two posts in advance, though I had made up my mind to remain at the next post—Poopo, a large town, and the residence of a governor and attendant authorities. Thus satisfied, they wished me a pleasant journey till our next meeting, and I departed, well pleased at having so easily baulked their curiosity, and thanking my stars for my fortunate escape from my unscrupulous companions.

From Machacamarca to Poopo the road presents little variety, following invariably a range of lofty hills, till after several leagues there is a sudden break, when in the midst

of a delightful valley appears the town of Poopo. In the time of the Spanish rule this was a place of considerable importance, and contained a large population. Being the site of a rich mining district, the silver mines were formerly very productive, as is proved by various large buildings situated in all directions, used for the purposes of machinery, which are now all deserted and in ruins.*

Amongst the curiosities of the place the church stands first. It is a clean, white-washed edifice, resembling a at distance one of the Chinese buildings with which one's ideas are familiar, owing to its numerous unconnected parts, walls with divers small windows or holes, small pilasters, and sundry other architectural eccentricities. A river runs through the town, dividing itself into two streams, one of pure water, the other of a reddish hue, impregnated, no doubt, with iron, or

* An intelligent miner, who happened to be at this post, informed me that these mines were abandoned from the want of enterprising capitalists, and the requisite machinery for getting rid of the water with which they were flooded, below which, he had no hesitation in saying, there was unbounded wealth.

some of the various minerals which abound in the neighbourhood.

Having domiciled myself at the post, and ordered my dinner with the greatest composure, feeling myself perfectly safe from any danger of intrusion, and laughing in my sleeve at having so completely taken in my ill-intended companions, one of the officers of the town, deputed by the governor to sign my passport, paid me a visit, and expressed a hope that I would spend the evening at his house. I politely acknowledged the compliment, but begged to decline the invitation, pleading as my excuse the fatigues I had undergone, and the necessity for my leaving early in the morning. I profited, however, by his presence to detail the circumstances of the unpleasant position in which I had found myself placed at the last post, and expressed to him my conviction that the miscreants were without passports. He told me that he would give directions that the sharpest look out after them should be kept, and then retired. Shortly after one of the Gauchos made his appearance, seemingly surprised to find that I was making this post my resting-

place. He asked me whether it was my intention to proceed, so as to gain the next post by nightfall, as I had proposed. To this I made answer, that I had made up my determination to remain, having received an invitation from the governor. On gaining this information he rode off at full speed, not even wishing me farewell; and thus, no doubt, he escaped being arrested. No sooner was he gone than I was visited by another government official, who told me that he was stationed at Huancani, and that he hoped to have the pleasure of seeing me, as I passed through that town. On this assurance we parted, and early next morning I started with the full purpose of availing myself of his invitation, and, perhaps, of passing an agreeable hour or two in his company.

Following the course of the hills, I found I was travelling through a tract of very verdant country, whose pleasing undulations gave great variety to the scene. A river of a tolerable breadth flowed at my feet, forming itself into pools, and winding along between its moss-covered banks, which abounded in the picturesque. On the opposite side of this

stream was the post of Paznia, where I was much struck with the comeliness of several Indian women, five or six in number, who were engaged in cooking or attending to other domestic duties. They were rather short in stature, and to all appearance not more than fourteen years of age; having all the buoyant vivacity of youth, with regular features, brilliant black hair, plaited into two tails, which reached down the back to a considerable length; handsome and well-formed feet, exceedingly small, and a bust of such prolific rotundity as might vie with that of the matronly beauties of more northern climes. All these perfections were toned down to a tint of the richest *sepia* imaginable, so as to give the *tout ensemble* a charm which is quite indescribable.

The head-dress of these fascinating creatures was anything but unbecoming. They wore a *tapa*, or sort of guard against the intense heat of the sun, made of wicker-work, covered tastefully with black velvet, which falls in graceful folds, or waves with the passing breeze, and protects the head from the effect of the sun's rays or the pelting

rain. A loose robe, in which a child is generally borne, is made fast to the front of the chest by a knot. It is usually made of a species of woollen stuff, striped, not unlike the Turkish patterns which are seen on shawls or scarfs. Then there is the *polera*, or petticoat, several of which are worn, according to the style and station of the individual, and form a sort of balloon round the body. They are generally made of blue Indian cloth, puckered into many hundred folds which fall gracefully. At the bottom there is a large flounce of the same material, over which is fastened a ribbon, or silk of a lighter blue. The feet are generally bare, or merely protected by a sandal of hide.

Having partaken of some *chupe*, refreshed my animals, and transferred my cargoes to fresh mules, I started for Huancani. Being mounted on a powerful mule, I rode on, unintentionally, far in advance of my luggage, and in a very short time lost all trace of it. My attention was soon occupied in noticing the natural phenomena of the earth and heavens. The hills in the distance assumed an extraordinary effect, from the clouds which

enveloped their bases cutting them out into all manner of curious and eccentric shapes. There were castles and animals, and various other objects, according to the imagination of the beholder, appearing to stand out in bold relief upon the sky. I observed the same effect to be produced on a large herd of llamas with their Indian drovers, all seeming to float in mid-air, and presenting a strange picture to the astonished vision. As I advanced further I was struck by the aspect of the *cordon* of hills which had completely changed their character. Rocks of enormous magnitude appeared to be split in all directions, forming large chasms and water-courses, over which stupendous blocks of stone, which had broken loose from their mountain bed, were stopped in their impetuous course by some projecting cliff. Then again, immense inaccessible caverns would seem to frown on the lonely traveller like gaping mouths, ready to swallow him up. Further on, this giant quarry forms a prodigious amphitheatre, where terrace rises above terrace till they assume the appearance of mighty towers, bastions, and ruined castles;

in fact, every possible combination of form which man's inventive mind could imagine. This natural museum of curiosities and wonders skirts the road on one side, the other consisting of wide and open plain for a considerable distance.

At the first of these rocks and precipices stands the small village of Huancani, a miserable locality, and not containing one decent house. As I passed through it, scarcely a living being was to be seen, except every now and then a few children playing about together in groups, in a perfect state of nudity. I looked about in all directions for my friend, from whom I had received so pressing an invitation, but without success; and being little tempted by the appearance of the place, I rode on. My course lay through a defile in the rocks, which opened into a spacious plain on the other side, covered with heather, and bringing to view several Indian farms and their surrounding patches of cultivated ground. Coming at last to a point whence two roads diverged, I was fairly brought to a standstill, not knowing which of them to take.

Having now ridden sixteen leagues, my appetite for food was beginning to give me some little uneasiness, and my poor beast and myself had become utterly jaded.

At this moment I was fortunate enough to fall in with a countryman, who was driving a number of laden mules, but instead of asking him my way to the post of Cattariri, which was close at hand, I inquired for the town of Ancacato, which was at a distance of six leagues. Of course the information I received was anything but encouraging, but, being anxious to find some place of shelter, I pushed my way on through a pass in the direction indicated, and found myself in a plain, fragrant with a thick cover of wild thyme and other sweet herbs, and completely encircled by the opposite side of the range of hills I had passed long before. The sun was now fast sinking beneath the horizon; but as I looked towards it, I thought I could discover indications of houses, trees, and cultivated fields, strongly marked against the sky. Accordingly, putting spurs to my poor, worn-out mule, well knowing that in these regions twilight is of short con-

tinuance, and that very soon all would be darkness, I pressed on for this land of promise.

As night advanced, the objects which I had seen receded from my vision, and soon were entirely lost to view. I now began to feel very uneasy, but recollecting that I should soon have moonlight to guide my steps, I cheered myself with this reflection, and continued my course. However, even this spark of hope seemed destined to fail me; for, in a very short time, dark and opaque clouds began to obscure the horizon, and the landscape was speedily enveloped in impenetrable gloom, made only the more terrible by sudden flashes of light, followed by loud and reverberating peals of thunder, which made the earth tremble under my feet, and echoed in the cavernous recesses of the surrounding hills. My poor beast now began to show symptoms of fatigue, and as he slowly progressed, being unaccustomed to travel by night, started back with fright at every dark object that presented itself on the road. Once or twice he nearly ran the risk of unseating me, as a terrific flash of forked lightning illumined the heavens,

and brought out into vivid distinctness the brink of the precipice that lay beneath me, at the bottom of which, a river fought its disputed way over contending rocks, breaking over them in foaming cataracts, whose dinning roar was too plainly heard in the lull of the storm. Then followed the loud clap of thunder with its deafening crash, and the pent-up rain bursting its barriers, forced its passage through the air in a perfect deluge of water, through which the electric flame was occasionally seen darting from cloud to cloud, and lighting up for a moment the dark arch over my head. Cold, famished, and drenched, I now threw the reins upon the neck of my mule, and gave up all in despair.

The poor animal, with the instinct peculiar to his race, after turning his head, and putting his nose close to my leg, to ascertain, as it were, that I was still safe upon his back, began to creep cautiously along, till he found a descent, then feeling his way to a ford, he conducted me to the opposite bank, occasionally stopping and looking round, expressing, as best he could by his dumb motions,

that all was right. It was no pleasant thing to be thus benighted, in such a fearful night, so many thousand leagues from my native land, in a country where a person might travel all the day without meeting with a fellow-creature. Had I chanced to find one upon this occasion, it is ten to one but that he would have understood only one of the primitive dialects of the country, and his words and his gestures would have been to me alike unintelligible. But, nothing daunted, when I saw my poor dumb animal putting so good a face upon the matter, I took from my holsters a small flask of sherry, and refreshing myself with its invigorating draught, I yielded myself up to his guidance.

He continued slowly on his way, now stumbling down declivities, and now scrambling up opposite embankments and elevations, occasionally starting at his own shadow, as the struggling moonbeam at intervals darted a ray of light upon the scene. At length, observing something in the shape of a human habitation, I hastened to satisfy myself that it was not all an illusion, when I was over-

joyed to find myself at last in the midst of an Indian village. I quickly dismounted, looking in vain for a light in every direction, for nothing so cheering met my eye. However, I mustered courage to knock at one of the doors, and, receiving no answer, endeavoured to force an entrance, but my efforts were unavailing, as everything was too well secured. Hastening from door to door, I met the same fate, and then, as a last resource, I began to parade the streets, and bellowed till I was hoarse. But not a sound was to be heard; not even a bark of defiance from some hostile dog. A death-like silence reigned around, recalling to my mind those cities of the dead of which we read in some Arabian tale.

My spirits, indeed, began to flag, as not even an echo responded to my necessities. Sadly mounting my poor mule, I prepared to wander from this scene of desolation and death, and having with some difficulty gained the road we had left, I determined to follow its course, come what might. The storm had now wasted its fury, and the hoarse murmur of the wind was fast subsiding. By

the uncertain light of a pale, watery moon, which the broken clouds occasionally brought full in view, I observed mountain upon mountain gathering around my track, and before me the entrance to one of those *cabradas*, or mountain-passes, so awfully grand in these regions, from their dark and dismal character.

Descending into this enormous gorge, we continued our course by the side of a large stream, whose turbulent wrath was echoed from a hundred caverns, as it battled its way over shelving rocks; whilst sudden gusts of wind, sweeping through deep caves and fissures, whistled dolefully, in sympathy with the gloomy scene around. We progressed, at times, in pitch-like darkness, and seemed to be making our way through the very bowels of the earth; and then the dim light which the fleeting clouds disclosed, would conjure up the gigantic rocks into fearful forms of superhuman shape, whilst the dark shadows which they threw across our path, struck terror even into my poor worn-out beast, who was now almost dead from fatigue. After enduring for some hours the horrors

of this gloomy place, I emerged from it at length, and found myself in the dry bed of what, during the wet season, must have been some mighty river, now only watered here and there by a few shallow streams. Hitherto I had been occasionally able to trace the foot-prints of animals, notwithstanding the darkness of the night, on the road I had been taking, and judged, therefore, that it might eventually lead me to some large town. But after fording these numerous streams I entirely lost my trail. However, by a slight glimmering of light which was emitted through the dark canopy of clouds, I fancied that I could discover a number of houses in the distance, and being desirous of arriving there with all speed, I forced onwards my reluctant mule, who seemed little disposed to advance further.

At last he stopped suddenly short, when, after having fruitlessly used every effort in my power to induce him to move another step, I gave up the task in despair. Just at this juncture, the moon shone forth, and I discovered, to my dismay, that what I had imagined to be streets and houses were no-

thing more than detached fragments of rock, at a distance from the road, and on the other side of several deep hollows, which now yawned before my astonished gaze, ready to engulph me.

Overcome with fatigue, cold, and hunger, I now dismounted from my mule, determined to incur no more risks of breaking my neck over one of these dangerous precipices, but to pass the night on the damp ground, and wait for the morrow. However, the restlessness of my poor animal would not suffer me to carry out my plan; therefore, throwing myself again upon his back, I gave him the reins and left all to chance. Deeply lost in my sad thoughts, as my mind dwelt upon the happy scenes I had left in my native land, I then felt with double force the danger I was now in, of never seeing home and kindred more; I began to grow quite disheartened, imagining that I had struck out into one of those interminable tracks which lie on the road to the Argentine provinces, and where I should in vain look for shelter and a friendly greeting from my fellow-man.

Whilst thus musing, the friendly moon

shed a light upon my path, and I plainly saw I had gained once more the beaten track where others had travelled before me. I must now have ridden at least twenty leagues; and pursuing my course according to the footmarks in the road, I found myself, after some time, to be approaching a village of some considerable extent. As I entered it I perceived several good houses, and selecting one somewhat larger than the rest, I hastily knocked, but received no answer. I then impatiently hurried from door to door, but with no better success. At length I was greeted by the barking of several dogs, which cheered me considerably, and I renewed my efforts with every sanguine hope as to the result. Presently I heard the sound of loud talking proceeding from one of the houses, and going up to the door, detected, amidst a volley of abuse and complaint, the word, "*ladrones*" (thieves). I thought it now high time to disabuse the minds of the inmates as to any idea of my hostile intentions; but so far from my pitiable story inducing them to give me the food and shelter I craved, I distinctly heard them, whilst

I was expostulating with them in bitter terms, in the act of removing their furniture and moveables, and heaping them up against the door, in order the better to secure themselves against the danger of my anticipated invasion.* Abandoning all hope of making an impression in this quarter, I tried my success with the other houses, but received in answer the invariable "*Anu;*" nor did I find my eloquence of any avail, backed as it was by an offer of two or three dollars if accommodated with a guide to the next post, or a lodging for the night.

I had come to the determination of sleeping in the streets, and of waiting for the morning light to assure the cautious villagers that I was indeed the poor misguided traveller that I professed to be, when I chanced to see a light through the crevices and under the doorway of a cottage in one of the bye-lanes. Rendered desperate by repeated fail-

* The Indians of some of these *punas* are proverbially known for their want of kindness to strangers, having to the present day that mistrust of them which originally had its origin in the severities practised upon themselves by the Spaniards.

ures, I immediately set spurs to my mule, who, participating in my feelings, made direct for the door, which I was preparing to strike with the butt end of my riding-whip, when he brought his head in contact with it with such violence that he burst it open. On looking within I saw two Indian women busily employed in cooking and serving some warm food to a Cholo who was reposing on the ground, wrapped in his ponchos. On my sudden intrusion the whole party started off in a fright. They soon, however, returned to hear my tale. Addressing the man in Spanish, I related to him all my misfortunes, and offered him any reward to conduct me to the next post, which he informed me was that of Catariri; or to supply me with food and shelter for the night for myself and mule. To all this he answered sulkily, and gave me a decided refusal. I then appealed to his compassion, telling him that I was a stranger in the country, that my poor animal was perfectly exhausted, and myself famished and ill from want of food and exposure to the weather, that my luggage and cook were awaiting me at the next post, and that with-

out speedy assistance, I must die on the road. However, this appeal availed me nothing; even the Indian women positively declined my company, and the man shook his head, and gave me a curt negative, as before. Seeing that I was loth to depart, and perhaps anxious to rid himself of my importunity, he told me that if I pursued the road I should find a post at a distance of half a mile on the other side of the village.

On hearing this news, I was soon again in my saddle, disappointed as I was to have to start afresh, alone, in pursuit of my night's lodging, my poor starved beast showing great unwillingness to leave the neighbourhood of the houses, as, no doubt, he anticipated, in common with myself, that his long and perilous journey was now brought to an end.* After wandering about for more than an hour in the direction in-

* These animals, on a long journey, become so accustomed to their rider, and the casualties of the road, that their instinct is quite astonishing. At night, if any strange object presents itself upon the road, the mule is sure to give notice by the pricking of his ears, snorting, and general impatience to avoid it. In the day

dicated by the Cholo, without seeing any signs of a post, and being as unsuccessful as before in my attempts to gain admission into any dwelling, I retraced my steps to the village, enraged at the deception practised upon me, and determined, now at last, to take vigorous measures to gain my object.

Arriving at the door at which I was before so unceremoniously repulsed, I again found it secured, and on my demanding admission was flatly refused. I was determined not to stand this any longer, and, therefore, rushing at the door with all my might, I soon brought it off its hinges, and with a pistol in one hand, heedless of the screams of the women, I seized the man by the collar with the other, telling him that if he did not immediately bestir himself and show me the post of which he had spoken to me, I would blow his brains out. This resolute appeal on my part had the desired effect. Muttering something to himself, the purport of which I neither knew nor cared for, the fellow without

time, if any great *hacienda* resembling a post lie upon the line of road, he is sure to make for it. Small Indian villages he takes no notice of.

more adó set out as my guide, and in a short time led me to a large square building in the outskirts of the village, and at a considerable distance from the main road. Having indicated to me the place I was in search of, he speedily decamped, probably, from the specimen he had witnessed of my determination when roused, rather fearful of the man he had to deal with. However, by this manœuvre, he lost the dollar I was but too happy to give him to reward him for his trouble, and atone for the fright I had occasioned him, notwithstanding his unkindness and want of humanity.

I was now, as I afterwards discovered, at the post of Ancacato. The master of the house, who, it appeared, was absent on some urgent business, was represented by an intelligent and mysterious-looking little individual, half Indian and half Cholo, who spoke Spanish very fluently. After I had detailed to him all my mishaps, he expressed every desire on his part to make me comfortable, but informed me that the principal room had been taken by six of the most ruffianly-looking fellows he had ever seen in

the whole course of his life. They had already robbed him of his forage, and threatened to take his life, if he gave the least alarm. To all their insolence he had been obliged to submit, as he and two postilions were at the time the only persons left in charge of the house. I soon recognised, from the description he gave me, my old enemies at the former post, and needed not the advice of the little Indian to creep cautiously to my room at the other end of the building, which, after the toils and perils I had undergone, was a great luxury to me, notwithstanding that it could boast of neither a window nor a door, and that on a night unusually cold.

Here ensconced together with my little friend, we contrived to pass the night very agreeably, he furnishing an excellent *chupe*, cooked outside the building, not to create suspicion, and I producing a bottle of brandy which I always carried in my holsters, to cheer our spirits, and warm our chilled frames.

Our conversation, for obvious reasons, was carried on in whispers, but notwithstanding our perilous position, we were rendered merry by the liquor we had imbibed, and became as

friendly as possible, indulging in many a smothered laugh at the stories with which we entertained each other. All this time I was not thoughtless of my poor mule, who was well fed and concealed away in an out-house, as the Gauchos, and such like people are in the habit of rising early in the morning, and carrying away all the valuable beasts they can lay their hands on. I was fortunate enough to procure a few sheep-skins to form my bed, which, after the fatigues of the day, was as soft to me as a bed of down, and there I slept till morning, in spite of the knowledge that I was resting under the same roof with such dangerous companions.

It was not a little singular, that with all my precautions to avoid these robbers and cut-throats, I had at last so unwittingly put my head into the lion's den. However, by my studied silence and good management I kept these gentry entirely ignorant that their intended victim was so near a neighbour, and completely in their power. Early in the morning they were on foot, and helping themselves to many things belonging to the master of the post, they started on their

journey, leaving me to congratulate myself on my narrow escape from having fallen into their hands.

Being able now to breathe freely, I thought it prudent to send the postilion to Catariri, to inform my servant as to my whereabouts, and request him to come on with my baggage on the next day. Whilst awaiting their arrival, I derived much amusing and interesting information from my generous host. He told me that the postmaster himself could neither read nor write, but that he had an amanuensis—a man of brilliant education, who did everything in that way for him, and who was sent for to go many leagues away when his services were required. He then assured me that he was extremely attached to my countrymen, many of whom he had met in the course of his life, and for whom he should always entertain the greatest regard. All strangers he designated by the term Latins, and professed to be able to speak their language. I asked him to give me a specimen of his ability, when he spouted a little Spanish with Latin terminations, interlarding his discourse occasionally with

Ave Marias, Paternosters, and other prayers. After a short pause in our conversation, I chanced to take out of my *alforja* a copy of the Evening Mail, when my learned friend requested the loan of it. Complying with his demand, I was astonished to hear him read it aloud after his fashion for above an hour, adding his Latin terminations, and appearing to regard himself as if he had indeed performed some most astounding feat.

I then took the liberty of inquiring if he understood the meaning of any of the words, to which he replied with the most perfect *sang froid*, that he comprehended all that he had been reading, and that he was quite charmed with it. This was really too much for my patience and gullibility, and I could not refrain from fairly laughing outright; at which my friend was so far from being indignant, that he seemed to regard it as a great compliment, and readily joined in chorus with all his might. Soon after my baggage arrived in custody of my servant, who was delighted to find me at last safe and sound, as he had despatched Indians in search of me in all directions, throughout the whole

of the previous night. After the necessary arrangements for my departure were concluded, I amply rewarded my amusing little friend for his kindness and trouble, and finally bade adieu to Ancacato, with all its reminiscences.

CHAPTER II.

Luvichoco—Calapaeni—Macha—Polcapillo—Aullagas—Its silver mines—Caracara—Challoma—Mamaguasi—Chuquisaca—General description of the town, its churches, and monasteries.

It was no small satisfaction to me, on leaving the post of Ancacato, to think how fortunate I had been in recovering my lost mules and baggage, and in escaping from the many dangers of the road to which I had been exposed. I now started afresh in tolerable spirits, and not much the worse for my fatigues and want of food on the previous day. The country upon which I was entering seemed to promise greater variety than that through which I had already passed. The extensive and monotonous plains were

fast disappearing, and noble mountain scenery had commenced to supply their place. Leaving the stony and cold bed of the river, together with dismal *cabradas* and rocks, fruitful in painful suggestions of my late unlucky adventures, I now began to ascend some high hills, from the summits of which I could discern a mass of mountains forming chains and groups on all sides, and separated from each other by verdant valleys and deep glens, in whose bosom flowed rippling streams, sparkling like gems in the bright rays of the morning sun.

Traversing hill and dale alternately, I at length arrived at the bed of a river, which in the wet season must have been of considerable magnitude, but now reduced to the dimensions of a very diminutive stream; and ascending the opposite bank I climbed up the steep declivity, till I gained the brow of a hill, whence I looked back upon the valley beneath. From this point I had a perfect bird's-eye view. In fact, at such a height was I standing from the valley, that I took a troop of laden mules who were crossing the bed of the river for a flock of sheep.

The descent required nearly an hour and a half to accomplish, principally in consequence of the road taking a very zigzag course; and when I arrived once more at the bed of the river, I found that our way lay across the opposite mountain at a very inclined angle. So difficult was the ascent, that my poor beasts were very much distressed, being obliged to pause almost every moment to take breath.

When the summit was gained, the descent was more gradual, and the country around appeared more habitable and accessible to man and beast. Here and there I perceived many an Indian dwelling with their *corrales* filled with sheep or llamas, which were now undergoing the process of being sheared, as this was the season for that operation. Crossing the bed of a mountain torrent at the bottom of the hill, I now began to ascend a succession of slopes, one after the other, until I had at length reached a considerable eminence, where the eye rested over a very extensive and varied tract of country. The sun was at this time sinking beneath the horizon, and lighting up everything with his

golden beams. Vale after vale gradually assumed a darker shade, whilst lofty hills and projecting cliffs only stood out in bolder relief on the dark sky. Beneath the ridge on which I stood was a plain of some magnitude, carpeted with nature's loveliest green, through which, under a deep and moss-covered embankment, a silent river pursued its eccentric course, giving life and beauty to all around. In the distance were to be seen those clusters of mountains so peculiar to the southern hemisphere, the outlines of which grew fainter and fainter as the shades of evening gradually spread themselves over the scene. Descending from these acclivities to a *plateau*, which was situated between two hills, I reached the post of Luvichoco, and there determined to fix my resting-place for the night.

This post is inferior to many on the road, although the room I occupied was tolerably snug and warm. It was but slightly thatched, so that as I lay in bed I had an opportunity of pursuing my studies in astronomy. After partaking of a good dinner, together with tea from my own provisions, with a very

great relish, I retired to rest in the very best humour. I invariably found that a box of Santa Cruz cigars was an indispensable adjunct on a journey; as, by dispensing these judiciously to postmasters and postilions, you gain the good-will of all. On this occasion, as on many others, I was not slow to secure the good graces of those around me at so easy a rate. After a sound night's rest I arose as fresh as ever, and eager, now that I was approaching so near the place of my destination, to push on without delay. Having settled all demands, I departed under a clear azure sky, with the bright rays of the morning sun to cheer me on the way.

The mountain scenery, as I passed along, was truly beautiful; hill and dale, richly clothed with verdure, alternating as far as the eye could see, when everything was lost and blended with the indistinct horizon. Here I met, on his way to La Paz, the mounted courier, undergoing his arduous task, for the paltry pittance which the Government affords him.*

* I am informed that these *employés* are extremely ill-paid for the services they render, from the fact of the

My journey hitherto had extended over a tract of country twelve or fourteen thousand feet above the level of the sea. I was now about to descend from this remarkable elevation, by a series of gradations, to a considerably lower level, and a warmer temperature. The road began to wind round large mountainous ridges of loose and broken rocks, some of them of enormous magnitude, and split and shivered into every possible form, no doubt by the action of the water in the wet season, when they occasionally detach themselves, and fall with a terrific crash over steep precipices into the valleys beneath. I found the descent to be of a most perilous and fatiguing character, having, in the course of its circuitous windings, passed over a distance of scarcely less than three leagues. The plains below are traversed by a river of clear water, which runs into a small lake alive with every species of wild-fowl. At a short distance is the post of Calapaeni, which

Indian couriers, who perform the whole journey on foot, undertaking to convey packages of letters for the trifling sum of a few dollars, and arriving only a few days later.

deserves notice, as containing the very best accommodation, and, in all respects, being infinitely better than many others I found upon the road. Being fatigued with my day's journey, I was not slow to avail myself of the advantages it offered, and determined to pass the night there.

Next morning I was very early in my saddle, and anticipating much pleasure in meeting with fresh novelties, as I continued my journey. Habit is second nature; and now I had become so inured to the kind of life I was leading, that I thought little of the mishaps which occasionally crossed my way, and had learnt to value the agreeable excitement to body and mind, which was afforded me during so interesting a tour. This day I passed over several large tracts of level ground, occasionally varied by low mountain ridges; the stunted grasses of the plain giving way to broken ground, and the road being strewn with large stones of a reddish colour, owing to the iron with which the soil is impregnated.

After descending into the bed of a river, where sundry small streams were meander-

ing over loose stones and pebbles, and rounding a promontory which jutted out into the road, the town of Macha appeared in sight, imbedded in stony hills, where the iron ore might be seen throughout their whole extent. Macha is a poor and miserably-built locality, containing only two tolerable buildings, namely, the church and the post-house. To add to the discomfort of the place, it appeared almost deserted; but I afterwards learnt that, although the country immediately around seemed so sterile, there were rich lands at no great distance, and capable of profitable cultivation. To these the inhabitants emigrated from the town, for a certain length of time every year, thus accounting for the state in which I found it.

The post, unlike the other buildings, was large and commodious. Here I monopolized a small room, with a window towards the street, the walls of which were covered with every kind of doggrel verse in praise or deprecation of the several Presidents of the Republic; written, no doubt, by the officers of different parties on their march, or travellers desirous of leaving behind them

specimens of their wit and ingenuity. Having partaken of some refreshment, I was sitting at the window smoking a cigar, when my attention was attracted to an Indian idiot youth, almost in a state of nudity, who howled like a dog, and kept on grinning at me. He was surrounded by a number of canine friends, who seemed perfectly to understand him, and, in fact, appeared to be his only companions, for the Indians who passed by took no manner of notice of him. Finding in my *alforja* a small loaf of bread and part of a German sausage, I threw them down to him. The first he commenced to devour with the greatest voracity, but having regarded the meat for some time very suspiciously, he at last gave it to his dog companions, who, less scrupulous than himself, soon fell to work, and devoured it up in an instant.

Being fully recruited by a night's rest, I re-commenced my journey on the following day in high feather. Taking my way through the town, I ascended the hills at the back of it; an exploit of some difficulty, since, from their being literally covered with fragments

of iron ore, imbedded in stones of some magnitude, scattered about and standing in every direction, a single false step might have thrown down the mule and impaled the poor traveller alive on one of the many projecting points that bristled around him. I now entered a *cabrada*, walled on one side by mountains some thousand feet high, occasionally forming precipitous slopes, covered with verdure, as far as the bed of a flowing stream beneath, where large blocks of stone, of many hundred tons' weight, detached apparently from the heights above, hindered its course, causing many a rushing cataract that foamed and bubbled as it fought its way. On the other side, rocks and shelving precipices, together with the loose earth, undermined by many a running spring, rendered travelling extremely perilous.

Occasionally the loud thunder of some ponderous fragment of rock greeted the ear, as, loosed from the mountain pinnacle, it swept its desolating course to the plains beneath. The pathway abounded in difficulties, and in some places was hazardous in the extreme. Often not more than two feet

in width, it crossed a shelving precipice, under which, at the depth of many fathoms beneath, roared an impetuous stream. At other times it leads the traveller between high walls of rocks, in a passage where there is scarcely room for his mule to go through, and where he incurs the risk of having his limbs broken by the projecting points of rugged stone.

After advancing more than half-way through the pass, the road becomes wider, and the hills less high; and after skirting the ruins of a deserted Indian village, which, from its position, and the character of its mineral range, must at one time have been a place of mining importance, the path, instead of the high and dangerous flight it had lately taken, approaches now the moss-covered banks of a rippling stream, almost to the water's edge. The river gains in breadth as it advances, resolving itself into shady pools, whose feathered tenants, disturbed in their aquatic gambols, rise majestically in the air, and describe a circuitous flight in astonishment at the profane foot of the stranger, who dares to molest their solitudes. Again

alighting in some secluded spot, they bask in numbers in the warm sunshine of this tropical clime. On leaving the *cabrada* several towering detached rocks are seen, resembling the ruins of some ancient fortress, passing by the side of which, the traveller crosses the river, and descends into a lower plain of some extent, till the road brings him to the bed of another river, between banks of red earth and gravel, where herds of llamas are gathering their frugal meal from scanty tufts of grass scattered here and there. After ascending the opposite bank, the post of Polcapillo came in sight, at which prospect I quickened my steps, and soon found myself comfortably reposing within its walls.

This post-house I discovered to be much superior to others that I had met with. It contained good rooms, well papered and cleanly, and the accommodation better than that afforded at most of the public buildings upon the road. I remained here merely sufficiently long to procure myself some refreshment; and having ordered fresh mules for my baggage, and seen it properly balanced and secured, I started again on my travels,

and soon found myself near the entrance of another mountain pass.

I had scarcely reached it when I observed the indications of a gathering storm. Soon my ears were stunned by several loud explosions, like the sound of distant artillery booming along the horizon. Fearful of being exposed to the pelting rain which I knew would follow, I set spurs to my poor beast, and hastened, accompanied by my cook, as fast as my mule could carry me, in search of some cave or mountain shelter, the atmosphere all the while becoming momentarily colder, and more obscure. However, the tempest, travelling at a rapid rate, soon overtook us, and the bursting clouds enveloped us in a shower of hail, of such dimensions that it was impossible to face it. Our animals, which required no entreaties to turn their backs upon the storm, could not, by force of whip or spur, be made to move. The aspect of the *cabrada*, dismal from its wild, rocky caverns, was rendered more awful owing to the darkness of the atmosphere, and the occasional flashes of forked lightning dashing against its walls of stone; while the

mighty thunder, bursting above our heads, echoed from rock to rock, and vibrated in the deep chasms of the subterranean defile. In one of those moments of repose which took place amidst this strife of the elements, the hail had ceased, and in its place the wind was driving before it volumes of snow, which wound and wreathed itself around every object in many a graceful form. Then a fresh hurricane burst from the vault of heaven, scattering the fallen snow in all directions; and darkness more terrible than ever forbade our progress, where yawning precipices threatened instant destruction.

Thus my companion and myself, bending before the storm on our terrified beasts, wandered, not knowing whither; and fearing the certain death to which we were exposed in advancing further, we endeavoured cautiously to retrace our steps, and in so doing we became immersed in a morass, sinking to our very girdles,—a danger from which we with difficulty escaped.

The storm having expended its fury, and the face of the heavens being now partially cleared, we were enabled to discover our

way, and once in the right road we followed the course of the bed of the river, till at last we emerged from the defile. Passing a number of roofless and deserted houses, we followed on in the same direction, one side of the road still maintaining its rocky and ponderous character, until it joined a stupendous range in advance. We then descended to the depths of the valley beneath, having two outlets which wound around the base of these chains; and here we could behold mountain on mountain piled before us, forming a series of giant steps, till lost in the clouds above, in the midst of which stood perched, like a crow's nest, the town of Aullagas. The approaches to this place were by means of a narrow footpath, worn by constant use, across the steep and rugged rock, by the side of which a mountain torrent foamed and roared as it dashed from crag to crag, and formed several beautiful falls and cascades in its progress to the vales beneath.

When I had gained the elevation on which the town was built, I found one long street thickly peopled by Cholos and Indians, all of them miners. There were numerous small

shops, containing necessaries for the inhabitants, who number between six and seven hundred. This is, in fact, a noted mining district,* the various entrances to the several

* The extensive mineral range, in which is situated the town of Aullagas, abounds with silver. It is found in different degrees of purity, and at one time the locality was crowded with mines, which were worked by the Spaniards, with great profit. Hundreds of labourers were then employed upon the works, and speculators amassed large sums of money. Since then, most of the rich mines have been flooded, and fallen in, or abandoned from the want of capital and machinery. However, some of the works are still carried on, and, I understand, profitably, although solely by means of manual labour.

The mode of working these mines is as follows:—A number of *peones*, or day labourers, are drafted to a mine, and provisioned for three days. The proprietor provides a quantity of crowbars, sharply pointed, by means of which an incision is made in the quartz, or rock, the bars being continually changed as they become blunted. When the aperture has been made of a sufficient depth for blasting, the rock is exploded, and thus they proceed throughout the whole of the period. The substance to be operated upon is often of such a degree of hardness, that little progress is made after a great deal of manual labour has been bestowed upon it. After an explosion, the fumes of the powder will hang about the mine for hours, often producing very baneful

workings being visible by the small apertures which strike the eye at different elevations on the mountain's side. I now turned off through the town, passing by a succession of small dwellings which formed a continuation of it, and descending to the plains, enjoyed the beautiful prospect of the purple hills rising around me in awful grandeur, and encircling me as in an amphitheatre. After crossing the plain, and admiring, as I went, several small lakes, whose surface mirrored the fleecy clouds as they swept over the firmament, I ascended a number of rocky hills, one above the other, following in a circuitous direction a small path, which seemed to have been either hewn or blasted, where an accumulation of pointed fragments of stone rendered my progress anything but

effects upon the unfortunate miners. The *malaria* in most of the mines is of so deadly a character, owing to the extreme want of ventilation, that the greater part of the *peones*, after following their occupation for any length of time, suffer greatly from ague and constitutional disease of the lungs, together with expectoration of blood, which is sure to be followed by a speedy death. The average rate of life in this sort of mine rarely exceeds thirty years.

agreeable; as, without the greatest care, I was in danger at every step of breaking my shins, or falling prostrate over some sharp angular projection.

When I had attained the summit, my senses were staggered at the prodigious depth below me. I had now to make my descent on the other side, and found it extremely perilous, as it was formed by a series of enormous steps in the rock, so far apart that my mule had to jump from one shelving precipice to another, at the imminent risk of injuring himself in the fall, or (what was of vastly more importance to myself) of breaking his rider's neck. The whole course is characterized by a quantity of white stone of a chalky character, which reflects the sun's rays so powerfully, that I was completely blinded; and, perhaps, from that cause escaped many a fright I should otherwise have experienced. I may safely affirm that, without one exception, this is the most stupendous descent I met with during the whole course of my journey. At the base are several springs issuing from moss-covered banks, which form wells, and flowing into

the narrow entrance of a *cabrada*, become little streams, gaining in width as they advance.

On one side the barrier is composed of rocks almost perpendicular, of some thousand feet in altitude, covered with shrubs and verdure, on which were feeding numerous goats and flocks of sheep with their lambkins, sporting from crag to crag, and hardly distinguishable owing to their vast altitude. On the opposite side the embankment is of a less imposing character, presenting a honey-combed, cavernous appearance, and where many *Biscachos* were seen appearing and disappearing in the declivities. I still followed the gradual slope of this pass; and on emerging from it, another of those extraordinary descents came in view—being, however, on a smaller scale, and presenting a less terrible aspect. This accomplished, and safe in the plains below, I began to feel myself greatly fatigued with the exertions I had undergone, and, overwhelmed with the grandeur and magnificence of the scene, my mental faculties were as completely prostrated as my bodily energies were exhausted by sheer manual exertion.

By this time the sun had nearly set, and knowing that in a very short time it would be completely dark, I urged my way as fast as possible for the next post. I soon fancied that I had arrived at it, supposing that some buildings which I saw under the delusive influence of the dim twilight were the desired haven, but I was doomed to be disappointed. I hastened from house to house, hoping that each succeeding one might be that of which I was in search; but, on a nearer view, they all turned out to be poor tenements, no doubt belonging to some small Indian farmers, and each firmly secured and uninhabited.

All at once a light appeared in the distance, and I determined to make for it, thinking that, at all events, I might be able to procure some information from the inmates of the dwelling whence it proceeded. I had no sooner started off, in the direction in which I had seen it, than it suddenly vanished, and after a short time appeared again at a greater distance off and quite in an opposite direction. Giving up all hope, therefore, of following so inconstant a guide, I retraced my steps to the path I had hitherto

followed; and, after fording a river, I luckily found a road winding over some rocks, apparently newly hewn or blasted in order to form a passage, but at such an acute angle that the ascent was fatiguing and painful in the extreme, and certainly not to be surmounted in darkness, except by the incredible sagacity of a patient mule. In broad daylight a degree of confidence is inspired which overcomes all difficulties, and makes the mind less alive to the dangers of the way; but when all is wrapt in gloom and darkness, there is such uncertainty at every step, that the imagination greatly magnifies the real dangers which exist, and conjures up horrors which have no foundation but in the mind. Such was my case, as I was borne by my patient beast I knew not where; night having now completely set in, and there being no clue by which I could discover in what direction I was travelling, or whether it would conduct me to some friendly habitation or not. After much exertion in making the ascent of these steep rocks, the summit was gained, when a long and dreary expanse of *pampas* presented itself.

After keeping on the road for some leagues, I arrived at a farm-house, where I gained the information that the post was but a short distance in advance. Cheered with the good news, I hastened on with all speed, but still without seeing any signs of the wished-for dwelling. I began to think that I had either passed it or taken a wrong road, when, all of a sudden, my mule brayed with all his might, and showed a disposition to strike out of the road along which we were progressing. Considering this rather a good omen than otherwise, I trusted myself entirely to his guidance, and, to my great joy, after a short time, I could distinguish through the gloom the square form of a building. No traveller in the desert ever greeted the welcome caravansary with more satisfaction than I experienced when I found myself at last within the walls of the post of Caracara.

With the exception of a tolerable sleeping room, this place afforded very deficient accommodation. As for provisions, they were not to be had for love or money; so that I found, had I not been provided with my own stock, which now came in quite *apropos*,

I must, chameleon-like, have fed on air. Fortunately there was fodder for the animals, although it was sold at a price enormously high. After I had satisfied my appetite, I was informed, to my comfort, that a man had been murdered in the neighbourhood a few days before, by robbers from the capital. This was not calculated to give me very pleasant dreams. However, the fatigues I had undergone during the day made me sleep soundly enough notwithstanding, and on starting again in the morning I merely took the precaution to see that my holsters and pistols were in first-rate condition, and available if wanted.

The ground was this morning white with a fall of snow, which had taken place during the night. Crossing a small stream soon after I had recommenced my journey, a number of singular-looking rocks appeared in clusters, and increased in magnitude till they assumed a towering aspect, wild and rugged in the extreme; the road gradually narrowing till it was lost in a terrific cataract, of fearful impetuosity, which, during the wet season, must render the way wholly impas-

sable. My hardy mule, however, with that sagacity and precaution peculiar to his species, here picked his way in places where a human being, on foot, could not by any possibility have ventured. Gaining the plain, I soon entered some lower grounds, where the change of temperature was plainly perceptible, and nature wore a warmer and more agreeable aspect. As I advanced, I passed several small ridges, and by degrees descended lower and lower, till, at the bottom, where flowed a clear stream, I entered a *cabrada* of some width, having green sloping hills on one side, and on the other high mounds filled with slate quarries, with the *stratum* protruding through the surface in a transverse direction, and extending for many hundred feet in length. The bed and embankments of the river were of the same character, and appeared to have been hewn by the action of the waters in forcing their course.

Hitherto, scarcely a tree was to be met with; but now, on both sides of this pass, shrubs, flowers, and trees, were seen in great abundance. After passing, about midway,

several *ranchos*, or small Indian farm dwellings; and approaching the extremity of the *cabrada*, the sides approximate, and the rocks assume a very grand and imposing character; whilst at their base flows a beautiful crystal river, reflecting the clear blue sky through the noble willows which wave their drooping branches in the balmy breeze. Here would a Claude or a Poussin revel with delight in the midst of nature's loveliest charms. In rich exuberance she displayed beauties which might vie with the most elaborate pencillings of the imagination—picturesque grottoes and caves; peaceful little lakes, on whose soft bosoms rested the fair water-lilies, whose forms were reflected as on a sheet of limpid glass; and then the rich fragrance of the sweet flowers which had sprung into life in this calm and sheltered retreat. All this combined to render the picture complete, and the different features of the scene at once charmed the senses, and pleased the fancy with the infinite resources which nature has at her command.

At this spot I encountered two military men on horseback; the first, a spare, dimi-

nutive gentleman, proved to be the celebrated General Agrada, renowned for his valour in the history of his country. He was accompanied by his *aide-de-camp*, and on seeing me, bowed politely and passed on. I now, at last, emerged from this almost interminable pass, and made towards a range of rocky mountains, from whose sides projected many a stunted tree and shrub, the road following in a short space of time the blasted or broken rock, in a path of the rudest construction. It continued through a series of ascents and descents of the most formidable character, and in some places seemed perfectly impracticable.

All at once the road leaves these mountain windings, and opens into a flat and extended lawn, whence the view was most grand and beautiful. In the far distance the constant undulations of mountain and dale were lost in the blue horizon. On the edge of a precipice of apparently fathomless depth, I perceived that two pyramids of stones had been piled, and surmounted with crosses and decorated with garlands of flowers, probably placed there by some devout Indian girl, as her morning

offering. On this table-land, in the midst of the mountain range, is a picturesque *hacienda*, and extremely interesting from its romantic situation. It is furnished with a number of watch-dogs of most savage aspect, who seemed disposed to do their duty most heroically, as on my near approach they rushed out from its portals, breathing defiance in no unmistakeable manner.

The sun was far advanced in his course when I arrived at a steep descent, at the bottom of which ran a stream, where a number of Indian drovers were quenching their thirst, as the several herds of llamas under their charge, disburdened of their loads, were browsing and refreshing themselves in the running waters. Many of their owners were busily employed in kindling fires, in preparation for their evening meal, and close beside them were piled their cargoes, in pyramidal order, ready for the morning's start. After ascending the steep and broken side of the opposite embankment, a visible change took place in the appearance of all around. Luxuriant trees in full verdure, and beautiful flowers, bloomed under the

more genial influence of a warmer temperature. Thick copses began to show themselves in all directions. The air was sweetly impregnated with a thousand odours, and the busy hum of myriads of insects vibrated upon the ear, as night cast her sable mantle on the closing day.

Gradually descending from the rocky eminence, I came to an open space, where enormous stones and shingle lay scattered in all directions. I perceived, on a slight elevation, a chapel dedicated to the Virgin, opposite to which were a few Indian cottages, with their accompanying patches of cultivated land; and not far from this spot were the ruins of the post, which had been washed away by the impetuosity of the river during the rainy season. Whilst the house was being rebuilt, the postmaster had constructed a sort of hut for himself and his family, but as there was no accommodation for any one else, I was disappointed in my expectations of finding shelter for the night, and, the day drawing fast to a close, I had no alternative but to be satisfied with some slight refreshment, and to push on for the next post. However, I

had the pleasure of knowing that I should be favoured by the light of the moon, and accordingly I started afresh, and after a steep ascent, gained the plains.

Continuing for some distance across a flat piece of country, a winding descent led me to a lower plain of considerable breadth, skirted on both sides by some gloomy-looking rocks. After crossing some streams, and a tract of broken ground, I found my way into a rich valley, filled with luxurious vegetation. The gentle murmur of numerous springs stole agreeably on the senses; and as the bright moon arose in the heavens, shedding her brilliant light upon the scene, many a flourishing vale, together with dense woods and thickets, imperceptibly crept upon the sight. After passing through a tract of country abounding in orchards, in which the trees were bending with delicious fruit, I came to an open copse; and after that descended into a hollow, which formed the entrance to one of the most magnificent and extensive *cabradas* I had met with in the whole course of my journey.

In the centre of this mountain passage ran

a river, which, breaking over rocks, formed numerous cascades and pools, near which drooped noble willows, reflecting their graceful branches in the waters beneath. The narrow entrance was overshadowed by trees and shrubs which grew spontaneously on the banks, and creeping plants intertwining themselves with many a variety of beautiful flowers, hung in festoons, or formed a canopy which hid from the traveller's gaze the glories of the bright firmament over his head. Occasionally some high rock would cast its deep shadow across the scene; and then, again, all would stand revealed before the dazzling light of the starry orbs, shining aloft in all their wonted splendour.

Enjoying the delights of this sylvan Paradise, I passed several small houses and farms, occupied chiefly by persons who are engaged in distilling a kind of spirits of wine, here called white brandy, and much consumed by the Indians and the lower grades of society. Crossing the stream, and ascending the opposite embankment, I passed through a small forest of trees, and emerged upon a lawn, whence the view on all sides was most majes-

tic. Looking down into the valley beneath, the eye is bewildered with its great depth, and the variety of objects which court the attention. Dark green forests, and clumps of towering trees, cast their black shadows to mingle with the shades of night. The roaring waters in the distance strike but as plaintive murmurs on the ear, and gentle zephyrs, awaking from their slumbers, gather in their course the choicest perfumes from Nature's loveliest flowers, to sweeten the nightly hours of repose. Slowly the morn ascends, and tips with silvery light the forest head. Under her soft beams the rugged monarchs of the wood stand boldly forth, and the deep vales are made to reveal their treasures through her talismanic charm. At intervals are heard the croakings of the *sapo*, a small reptile of the frog species; but the sounds it gives forth are of a most pleasing and enchanting character, and resemble the notes of a harp more than anything else that I can remember. These sounds are echoed far and wide by numbers of these animals, who appear to sing in concert, and produce a melancholy pleasure, as they suggest to the mind of the

contemplative traveller, a train of thought, in which friends, and kindred, and home, and bygone days may find a share. Descending from this point towards the valley, I came to a small level, surrounded by small *haciendas*, and immediately afterwards arrived at the post of Mamaguasi.

This post, although within but six leagues of the capital, possesses few conveniences. The master was absent, and nothing in the shape of refreshment was to be procured; so that, had I not been fortunate enough to have my own private stock to fall back upon, I must have fared badly enough. Added to this annoyance, I was informed that not a mule was to be found there. I therefore made bold to lay an embargo on the animals I had brought with me from the last post, much to the discomfort of the postilions, who were very anxious to decamp. To make sure of their not leaving me in the lurch during the night, I had the harness and trappings deposited in my room. I was not able to get very comfortable repose; for, as my dormitory could boast of but half a door, I was continually awaked by certain nocturnal

robbers of the canine species, who amused themselves by foraging amongst my provisions, and obliged me several times to quit my bed, forcibly to eject them. As day dawned, I was glad to get up and pursue my journey, promising myself various indulgences to make amends for the bad accommodation I had experienced.

The road lay along the bed of the river, and narrowed as I advanced, until the trees on either side entirely met and formed a delightful grove, underneath which flowed the crystal stream which occasionally formed, on its moss-covered banks, little pools and recesses of singular beauty. All at once the road diverges from this track, ascends the side of the *cabrada*, and traverses a number of hills. On the opposite side a vast plain stretches for some distance, when a succession of mountain chains follow each other to the very horizon, producing an effect extraordinary and picturesque in the extreme. The road, winding along a series of barren rocks, disclosed numerous hills, in the valleys between which I could discover many small farms and homesteads, all teeming with the

fruits of man's industry. Crossing this chain of hills, a vast plain presented itself to view, surrounded on all sides by sterile rocks and hills, between which and the plain on one side, but in a lower level, is situated Chuquisaca, the capital of Bolivia.

This city, like all other Spanish towns, being planned on a geometrical principle, presents, at a distance, very much the appearance of a draught-board. Its characteristic cleanliness, from the fact of all the buildings, public as well as private, being periodically white-washed afresh,—its conspicuous churches, Alameda, and flourishing trees and gardens, produce a very pleasing and agreeable aspect. Descending into the plain and crossing a small river, I found myself in a very short time within its precincts.

This city, once the princely residence of the Viceroys of Spain, is small in regard to its territorial extent, and, according to the present statistical calculation, does not reckon more than 1,400 souls. The first remarkable object on entering the town is the Alameda, or public walk. It is walled on all sides, and contains a zoological garden,—not of

living specimens as in England, but representations of wild animals and birds ranged on pedestals. A strange effect is produced by these groups, which are not only grotesque in point of shape, but create much amusement to strangers from the little attention which has been paid to the respective proportions of the several animals represented. Thus, for instance, an elephant, a cat, and a parrot, are all of a size; and as regards zoological information, are far from supplying the place of real specimens. The whole of these works of art, together with the gardens, *parterres*, &c., have been given to the city through the munificence of General Belza; and will, when completed, form a delightful place of recreation to its inhabitants. The town entrance to these gardens consists of a couple of triumphal arches, and near at hand are a Grecian temple and a reservoir of a very rude construction.

Not far from this public place of resort, is a chapel of a very elegant style of architecture. It is approached by a succession of steps, and is surrounded by pillars; and was built by General Belza, to commemorate his

miraculous escape from assassination on this very spot. The Plaza de San Juan de Dios is little worthy of remark. In the centre is an obelisk or pillar, and on one side of the square an hospital has taken the place of a church and convent which formerly stood there. From this Plaza a short street leads to the Plaza del 25 del Mayo, 1809, which is a magnificent square, covering an area of some thousand feet. The cathedral and palace form one side of it, and the remainder is filled by the Palace of the Congress, the Policia and Cavilda, and a few small shops. Over these are constructed balconies, which afford an agreeable lounge for the ladies in the after part of the day. *Cafés*, billiard-rooms, and sweetmeat-shops abound here; and outside most of the houses seats have been erected, which are a fashionable resort during the beautiful moonlight nights with which this climate is favoured. Numerous promenaders are then to be seen enjoying the society of their friends, and inhaling the refreshing breezes of the evening air. The houses in most of the streets forming the centre of the city are large and commodious,

and the more important edifices are built in that peculiar Moresco style in which the ancient Spaniards excelled, and which still indicates the former wealth and magnificence of their original projectors.

The city contains eighteen churches. Among the rest, the cathedral, without making any pretensions to architectural excellence, presents, externally, a very pleasing appearance. As regards its internal arrangements, contrary to the general custom, simplicity and good taste prevail to a very great extent. On grand occasions the nave is richly carpeted, and the grand altar, which is a little temple in itself, is decorated with a profusion of lights, supported in magnificent candlesticks of massive silver; and numerous *bouquets* of flowers, tastefully distributed, add greatly to the general effect. The aisles of the building are in accordance with its unpretending character, their only decoration being an occasional picture of some scene in the life of our Lord, or the martyrdom of some saint. There are two choirs, the smaller one, at the back of the grand altar, containing an organ and instru-

mental accompaniments, used only on particular occasions. At the extremity of the building is the grand organ, and a place for a full orchestra. The chapel-master, or director of the music, is one of the most refined and polished composers of the old *sonata* and *rondo* school, and, at the same time, a first-rate performer on the violoncello. His power in execution is as great as his taste as a composer, and this is evinced by the exquisite melodies which he draws forth from that elegant instrument, the Spanish guitar. The musical gems to which his genius has given birth, are sufficient to immortalize his name: many of them have found their way into Europe, and have drawn from the great Spohr the tribute of his unqualified approbation.

The church and monastery of San Felipe contain all that is requisite to throw a charm around the monastic life. There is a pleasant garden, with its fountain and trees, and around it are a series of arched galleries leading to the several rooms of the devout fathers. Not long since, a pious layman bequeathed to this order an adjoining house, consisting of very extensive premises, which

have been united to the original monastery by means of passages; but all the additional conveniences are utterly neglected, as the establishment, which is capable of containing so large a number of inmates, is, in fact, occupied by so few. In the interior of the church, which is characterized by great plainness and good taste, I observed, suspended from the roof, two archiepiscopal hats, probably intimating that, from amongst the brethren of this order, two had been raised to that dignity. The order of the Recoletas, composed chiefly of foreigners, and particularly Spaniards and Italians, possess a church and a monastery on a small hill commanding the town. These friars muster pretty strong, and are much respected for their devout demeanour, and enterprising and industrious habits. They exist principally by charity, but cultivate a large extent of ground, and dispose of the produce. The church and monastery of San Agostino formerly belonged to the Jesuits, and contained accommodation for several hundreds. On the expulsion of that body, the church was converted into a temporary theatre, and the monastery into

the great Tambo de San Agostino, one of the important caravansaries of the capital.

The church of San Francisco is built after the old style which was in vogue in the palmy days of the original fathers to whom it belonged. It is very richly ornamented, and possesses some curious carving, illustrative of that epoch. The choir is decorated in this way by representations of all the saints in the calendar, exquisitely executed and of much value even as antiquarian relics, though but little esteemed by the present proprietors of the building. The roof, likewise, exhibits that richness of design and elaborate ornament by which many of the rooms in the Alhambra are distinguished, the beautiful Saracenic decorations blending most gracefully with the style belonging to the old Spanish school of architecture. The convent of Santa Clara is, like that of La Paz, numerously occupied by the ladies of that order, who, on becoming members of the community, bestow a large dowry on the establishment for the common use. The church has been newly built, and decorated in a more modern style than the remainder

of the edifice, which is generally characterized by simplicity and good taste. The grand altar represents the *façade* of a temple, the columns of which are pure white with a gold moulding, and a most charming effect is produced by the background being painted of a clear celestial blue colour. A soft light shed over the whole from a window behind, covered by a gauze of the same delicate tint, very much enhances this effect. At the other extremity of the church, and facing the altar, is a frontage, resembling that of a prison, formed by iron railings, placed at some distance from each other, and divided into two tiers. Within these the shadows of the nuns, as they pass to and fro to chaunt their dismal prayers and responses, are just perceptible.

In the external appearance of the church of San Domingo there is an evident mixture of the Spanish and Moresco styles of architecture. The outer wall has a vast number of ornaments, and over these there are several minarets, which give the whole a very Oriental character. The belfry joins the *façade*, and is a very skeleton sort of structure, con-

sisting of small arches, in which are suspended the bells, attached to beams. These are approached by means of a wooden staircase at the side of the building. This church formerly belonged to the Dominicans, who possessed an extensive monastery on this spot. After the expulsion of the Jesuits, the establishment was discontinued, and the whole reduced to a curacy *(curato)*.

The interior of the building has pretensions to architectural excellence. The general style of decoration is extremely chaste, and the effect produced, on the whole, very pleasing. The buildings which originally formed the monastery are now devoted to other purposes. A portion has been converted into a post-office and apartments for the postmaster-general. The greater part of them, however, have been demolished, and on their site has been erected a large government building, containing a great variety of offices connected with the state. Amongst these is the Palace of Justice, a large quadrangular building, enclosing a court-yard, with a fountain in the centre. A gallery on the upper story, supported by arches, sur-

rounds this court-yard, and gives it a light and agreeable appearance. The space which it incloses amounts to 1,600 square yards. There are two inferior ones of less dimensions.

The church of San Miguel formerly belonged to a monastery, and externally presents a pleasing aspect. Attached to it is a large bell tower, which is situated in an inclosed yard, where some fine trees add a great charm to the general effect. The interior is, without exception, as beautiful a specimen of a place of religious worship as it is possible to conceive. It is decorated after the manner of the palace of the Alhambra, at Grenada, the roof being supported by two gables, exhibiting a most elaborate design of Moresco fretted-work. The grand altar is a gorgeous mass of carving, richly gilt, receiving light from two windows, artfully contrived, so as to throw their subdued and effective light without being seen. A small dome arises about a third of the length of the church from the altar end of it. This is supported in the same manner as the roof, and exhibits the same exquisite fretted-work.

Two elaborately-carved gates, covered with gilding, enclose small chapels, in one of which stands the baptismal font, of the same rich and costly construction, and both are surmounted by small domes of beautiful workmanship. There are several pulpits, of which language would fail to convey an idea, so rare and wonderful is the variety of carvings by which they are decorated. Other parts of the building contain altars, around which, from the roof downwards, is ranged a complete gallery of the most beautiful religious paintings extant, in enormous gilt frames, in keeping with the general character of the rest of the edifice.

Amongst this collection I am persuaded that many originals of the great masters are to be found. My opinion is based upon the merit which attaches to the works themselves, and also to the probability which exists of the monks, who amassed this species of property, having the means and opportunities of procuring these originals, and of having availed themselves of such opportunities. We must take into consideration the powerful influence exercised by all Roman-Catholic

orders, after so long a sojourn in the New World, and the bigoted reverence with which they have come to be regarded, both by the Spaniards and the poor simple Indians, who are glad to make any pecuniary sacrifice in favour of such persons as they look upon with superstitious awe. These communities, by grants, bequests, and exactions, under the pretence of a spiritual claim, gradually became exceedingly rich and powerful, and probably, with a view of facilitating the adherence of new converts, their policy and ambition has been to render their churches as beautiful and imposing as possible. With unbounded wealth at their command, they would, therefore, naturally endeavour to secure the very best works of art, and commission agents in the Old World to come to terms with the most skilled artists, and to pay them accordingly, money being no object. In this way I account for so many fine and rare paintings being found in these countries, though, of course, as may readily be supposed, inferior copies have found a market, or specimens of the handicraft of inferior workmen, not worthy of the name of art.

Another circumstance is worthy of notice. Several of the friars were no mean artists themselves, as is abundantly testified by many elaborate and gorgeous decorations, executed by themselves or under their directions. I remember some specimens of rich carving wrought by these men, which so struck my fancy that I made a careful drawing of them, as an example of monastic industry and skill. Persons of such refined artistic knowledge would, of course, naturally pride themselves on the possession of the productions of the best masters. Inferior works, or, at all events, such as would be inferior to their own capabilities, they would not tolerate. In what I have said, I refer more particularly to the character of the paintings which are treasured up in the capital of the Republic.

The supreme courts of law and equity hold their sittings at Chuquisaca, and it is to these tribunals that all appeals must be made. A host of judges, law officers, and satellites, belonging to these courts, swarm to a prodigious extent, and live like drones on the fat of the land, whilst, in fact, they render in return no adequate service to the

community. The judges themselves are very undignified in their manner, and whilst appearing to make much of all technicalities, soon by a nod and a wink agree as to the disposal of the case. And as the rule is that their discussions are strictly private, no attempt is made by the public to gain admission, or to gainsay the wise decisions at which they are supposed to arrive. The general rule seems to be, that causes last as long as any money can be gained by their prolongation, and the practice of paying all fees in advance seems to be invariably insisted upon. No funds—no law, seems to be the principle, and also that he who pays the largest fees eventually gains the cause.

Besides those who live by law, there is an almost innumerable host of learned doctors, as they style themselves, belonging to another class, the *padres* and *curatos*, who make their earnings out of the superstitions of the people. These are to be met with in all societies, and form a very dominant party. The *élite*, however, of this commonwealth, consists of a trading aristocracy, who perhaps call themselves merchants, though they keep

shops of their own, and some of them very ordinary ones. A great assumption and pride of bearing is manifested in their general demeanour, and on feast-days and holidays they are conspicuous for their display of dress and equipage. The very young men who the day before have stood behind the counter and measured out, perhaps, a few yards of ribbon, are to be seen on these occasions mounted on richly-caparisoned horses, with silver ornaments, and exhibiting all the swagger and airs of grandees of the first class. This peculiarity, however, may have descended to them from their ancestors, the Spaniards of the old world; and although in this respect, their conduct may have struck me as unbecoming, I am far from deprecating their close attention to business; for I hold it to be highly creditable for a man to be industrious in his calling, whatever may have been his antecedents.

There being no distinct trade of a pawnbroker in the Republic, every one is allowed to lend money on articles of value, at any rate of interest which he can procure. The general charge for one dollar per month is a *madio*

(3d. English), some extort much more. There is an enormous quantity of silver plate in use in the capital, and this is often left as security by those who are desirous of borrowing money, even to ten times the value of the loan. The great scarcity of money, and the intemperance of the middling and lower classes, cause them to squander away with astonishing rapidity whatever they borrow, and their want of industry so completely puts it out of their power even to redeem the goods which they have pawned, that they are almost in every instance utterly sacrificed, or claimed to pay an exorbitant interest.

The chief amusements of the place consist in the pleasures of social intercourse. Parties and cavalcades are formed for the purpose of visiting the neighbouring *quintas*, and here the true spirit of a pic-nic may be seen in the highest perfection. These little country-houses are often furnished in the rudest manner; a chair or two, a table, and a wooden bedstead, comprising all the moveables. It is often the case that a large party finds a great lack of plates, knives, glasses, and other necessaries, and great diversion is

occasioned by the unavoidable shifts to which they are driven. A sudden storm has often obliged a large number of ladies and gentlemen to pass the night in two or three miserable rooms; but the novelty of the adventure causes a great deal of merriment, in spite of the discomfort and want of accommodation to which the whole party is subjected. Persons of the better class in this city are, for the most part, very affable and obliging, and fully appreciate the society of a stranger, if he be deserving of their confidence. Balls and concerts form the staple of their means of entertainment. The young ladies are devotedly fond of dancing, and the charms of music are felt by all, engendering that sensitiveness and refinement which it is always so calculated to produce.

During my residence here I made several agreeable acquaintances. The family of Senor Dorado holds a high position in the city, from the fact of one of his sons, a secretary in the ministerial department, having married the daughter of the present President, General Belza. To be on good terms with the authorities, or, as we say in England, to

have a friend at court, is one of the greatest blessings which can be experienced in these countries. It has been remarked that the English are a nation of shopkeepers. However true this may be, it is equally so in speaking of many provinces in the New World. Senor Dorado is a merchant, dealing in general goods, wholesale and retail; and in conformity with the practice of even persons of the greatest distinction in this country, keeps a retail shop, where he is happy to serve you with articles from the value of a *madio* to that of thousands of dollars.

A young man of the name of Balza, an Argentine by birth, inherited a large fortune, which his father had accumulated by a successful business in the Republic. Together with his mother, he conducted a retail establishment in the city, in which he sold goods of foreign manufacture in all their varieties. To give the reader a fair idea of the degree of liberty which exists under the Government of these South American States, it may suffice to mention that, for some expression which this young man incautiously let drop, he was seized by order of the

Government, and forced to become a common soldier. Not content with subjecting him to the degradation of being drilled twice a-day in the Grand Plaza, close to his own dwelling, where he had been accustomed to every luxury which riches could furnish, he was obliged at last to leave the city, and march with his battalion three hundred miles on foot. After this punishment, so disproportionate to his offence, the Government relented, and the young man was allowed to return to the bosom of his family, and follow, without further molestation, his usual daily avocations.

A Monsieur Grog, once one of Napoleon's dragoons, has taken up his residence here. He had received from the English, in one of the numerous engagements in which he had taken part, a striking memento of the mortal strife, which has made him limp for life. This gentleman possesses one of the best shops in the place, and, according to general report, is immensely rich. Owing to his having married a native, and being himself a naturalized subject, the Bolivian Government had raised him to the post of Judge of

Commerce, a situation of some consequence. I had also the pleasure of the acquaintance of Senor Rosquellas, the noted violinist, who accompanied the celebrated Madame Catalini during her provincial engagements in England, some twenty years since. He was a Spaniard by birth; and having accumulated a large fortune at Buenos Ayres, which he managed to squander away in mining speculations, he retired with his wife, an Irish lady, to Chuquisaca, where he carries on a retail business, which gives him a comfortable independence. His son is a talented pianist and professor of the French language, and is acquiring much wealth as well as fame in instructing his various classes.

The archbishop of the province is an aged man, and much beloved by the poor, as once or twice a-week he causes alms to be distributed for their benefit at the Episcopal Palace. He was, I believe, nominated to his office as head of the Bolivian Church by the present President; but it appears this appointment gave umbrage to the Court of Rome, so that Mother Church has hitherto withheld her credentials, although I understand they are now anxiously expected.

Amongst other persons of distinction or importance whom I met with in this place was Colonel M——, the American *Chargé d'Affaires*. This individual was one of the heroes of Mexican notoriety, and who had been presented by the United States with a sword for the services he had rendered. He was of a very eccentric turn of mind, keeping aloof from all society, and his peculiar manners fully justified the strange opinion every one had of him. He was incessantly talking to himself; and, as he paced along his rooms, would address his flag and his sword, and return suitable answers to his own questions, in the highest tone of declamation. I can vouch for the truth of these little peculiarities, as I had the misfortune to live the next door to him, and heard distinctly every word which he uttered under the circumstances above-mentioned. Another strange vagary of his was to have a pair of pistols invariably placed before him on the table, whenever he granted an interview to any of the natives. This, in the course of time, operated in such a manner as to prevent any of them from approaching him at all. The quarrels which occasionally took place

between this man and his servant were most alarming, and were likely to lead to serious consequences. The latter often sought refuge in the adjoining houses, saying that his life was in danger, his master having cut at him with his sword, and threatened to shoot him. At length this eccentric being was recalled by his Government, to the great delight of the Chuquisacans, who allowed him to leave the town without a single farewell. The English *Chargé d'Affaires* was the only person that paid him the compliment of escorting him out of the place on horseback.

Monsieur Favre, the *Chargé d'Affaires* belonging to the French nation, was married to a countess belonging to the old *regime*, whose son was always getting into some mad scrape or other. He was a little man, with a visage deadly pale, and a beard *à la Juive*, and black as a coal. This extraordinary little personage was always speculating as to the amount of electricity that was in the air, and he always settled this point according as he fancied his own system to be more or less charged. Besides this, he had such a horror of the little vegetable called an onion, that if

by chance such a thing were ever found in any of the dishes used at his Excellency's table, he was ready to faint. The countess was a lady of unusual volubility of language, and such eccentricity of dress, that the good folks of Chuquisaca stared again and again with astonishment. These people were in the habit of giving a series of grand parties, evidently wishing to make themselves the lions of the place, and they thereby exposed themselves to much criticism.

The real lion of the place, however, was the Brazilian *Chargé d'Affaires*, Monsieur Lisboa. This gentleman, his pretty and amiable wife, and his family of lovely children, were truly beloved by all. He was remarkably affable and hospitable, keeping open house for every one that desired to join his circle. For many years he had resided at Paris, and had doubtless imbibed, during a residence in that capital, many of those good qualities and polished manners which are peculiar to the French nation, without at the same time descending to those petty frivolities which distinguish them. I may safely assert that few persons ever left their

consular duties, after many years' absence from their native country, so much to the regret of those amongst whom those years had been passed, as did M. Lisboa, when he finally bade adieu to his Bolivian friends. He was universally respected, and his removal from amongst them occasioned many an expression of sincere regret.

For the benefit of the rising generation of the Republic, Chuquisaca can boast of two universities, besides several seminaries. The degree of doctor of laws is most liberally bestowed, so that there is scarcely a man, or even a boy, but possesses an appendage of this nature to his name. The consequential airs and self-important bearings assumed by the inhabitants of this city, have become the theme of general ridicule throughout the whole of the Republic; so much so, that the common saying in the other provinces is, that the very dogs of the capital are doctors of law. The colleges are superintended by clerical professors, who are Jesuits, no doubt professing to belong to some other order, to avoid their expulsion from the country. These crafty men instil a sound instruction

into the minds of the youths under their charge, in which the doctrines of their creed occupy a prominent place, and qualify them afterwards for that position in life they are destined to fill. The costume of the collegians has a very pleasing effect, when they are walking in procession, or assisting at any of the grand services in the cathedral. It consists of a blue cloth toga, turned up with red, and decorated with a silver badge on the breast.

One of the judges, a man of letters, but of dissolute habits, was not a personification of Justice, as respects her blindness. The charms of beauty had evidently not been lost upon him, as was clearly evinced by the number of pretty Cholo girls, with infants in their arms, of whom he was the reputed father. One of these women, whose claims upon him had been utterly disregarded by this administrator of justice, unfortunately had no means of redress, as it was hardly to be expected that the judge who presided over the tribunal to which alone the case could be carried, would condemn himself in the matter. However, she was determined to

shame him into an observance of his duty, and made an appeal to her fellow-citizens in the following fashion. Having dressed up her little one as a judge, with wig and robe, and all the other paraphernalia belonging to the office, and affixed to it, both before and behind, the name of its father, written in large characters, she carried it in procession through the city to the sound of a drum and trumpet, with a crowd of women, children, and the lowest rabble, who joined in a long-continued volley of shouts, groans, and hisses, coupling, at the same time, the name of the learned doctor with the most opprobrious epithets. This curious proceeding was effectual in gaining the mother's cause, and the judge and father was but too glad to come to any terms, to avoid so glaring a scandal.

A building which was once a church and monastery, has been converted into an hospital; and the poor creatures who trust themselves within its walls, have often too much cause to repent of their choice, in the cruel treatment which they there receive. A set of young men, calling themselves doctors and

surgeons, congregate here to receive professional instruction from their seniors in years, but who are about as ignorant as themselves. Their presumption, however, surpasses everything; and the poor victims who are entrusted to their care are treated in so barbarous a manner by these heartless and ignorant practitioners, that scarcely a day passes but masses are said in the chapel for the poor sufferers who have died under their treatment, should their relations possess the means of paying for them. The intention of the institution cannot but be admired; and it is a great pity that the excellent purpose to which it has been devoted should be so utterly defeated. The authorities in the country should, by means of their agents in Europe, secure the services of some talented and well qualified gentlemen to fill the post of surgeons to this useful establishment, and thus lay the foundation of a school of medicine for the proper instruction of the native practitioners.

I remember the case of a young man, servant to the American *Chargè d'Affaires* at Chuquisaca, who took to drinking *pisco* to

such an extent that he brought on a fearful attack of *delirium tremens*. This poor creature was sent to this hospital, and on my going there, in the course of the same day, to see if I could be of any use to him, I found that he was dead. The fatal result was no doubt accelerated, in this case, as in many others, by the want of judicious treatment.

In the neighbourhood of Chuquisaca are two mountains, called Macho and Embra, which form a background to this interesting city. With respect to these, there is a vulgar superstition, which has been handed down by the aboriginal races from father to son, and seems to have inoculated the present Choloes. It is, that these mountains are filled with the precious metals; but that the spirit, or spirits, of the place, have caused the waters of the subterranean rivers to accumulate over these riches, so that if, at any time, the cupidity of man should venture to disturb their repose, an overwhelming deluge of water would rush down upon the city, and destroy everything in it.

Several springs, which issue from these

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mountains, supply the water which irrigates the numerous *quintas* and gardens which abound in this locality. It then escapes into a deep ravine, where, during the wet season, a formidable river presents itself; but under the parching influence of a summer's sun, this dwindles down into a mere running stream, sometimes scarcely discernible on the sands, or pebbly bed of the river. This outlet forms the main road for the numerous troops of laden mules and asses by which the commercial enterprise of the country is maintained; the former conveying goods of European manufacture, or the auriferous treasures furnished by the several mines which cover the surface of this favoured land; the latter, the fruits and necessaries of life produced by the patient industry of the frugal Indian. One side of the valley, in which the city is situated, presents a forest of mountain-peaks, not unlike, in appearance, the glaciers of Switzerland. In the opposite direction, the river winds amidst fertile hills and slopes, covered with pretty gardens and cultivated fields, and

forming the rustic retreat of the wealthy inhabitants, which, during the sultry days of the hot season, constitutes a desirable and fashionable watering-place.

CHAPTER III.

Preparations for homeward journey — Chuchiwassi—Bartolo—Puna—Bellin—Perilous travelling—Caisa—Disturbed night at Quirbe—Storm near Cotagaite—Accident to the cargo mules, and rise of the waters—Moncharachi—Visit in the neighbourhood of Nacareno—Tambo del Negro Muerto—Humaguaca—Menura—Leon.

HAVING determined to take the overland journey to Buenos Ayres, on my way to Europe, I commenced making the necessary arrangements. Two fine young men, in the capacity of *herreros*, with nine strong mules for saddle and baggage, were soon engaged to convey me to Salta, as well as a noble horse called Moro, which had been long in my service, and whose pedigree was unri-

valled for the famous pace suited to long journeys, and so much esteemed by the natives of the country. As it was essential that I should be well provided with a good stock of provisions, and some articles of culinary apparatus, I managed to get together something like the following medley assortment:—*charque* (dried beef), *chalmas* (dried mutton), preserved meats in tins, biscuits, rice, tea, coffee, chocolate, sugar, pepper, salt, potatoes, *ají* (red pepper pods), wines, spirits, syrups, porter, a bladder of lard, some butter and cheese, a frying-pan, tea-kettle, chocolate-pot, stewpan, lantern, sperm candles, soap, and, though last not least, a box of cigars.

Having thus a little personal property to protect, and having learnt from experience how lax are the notions of the people of this country, as regards the *meum* and the *tuum*, I furnished myself with a good supply of defensive weapons, as the following enumeration will show:—A rifle, a double-barrelled fowling-piece, two brace of pistols, two swords, and two Gaucho knives. An Italian cook, named Battista, whose services I had

hitherto found most invaluable, was an indispensable addition to my party, in a tedious journey of more than two thousand miles across the Pampas. Having had my saddles, harness, lassoes, and saddle-bags well examined and put into thorough repair, and having procured a good *armafraz* (a leathern bed and bedding-cover, strapped in the centre and thrown over a horse), as well as several warm and waterproof ponchos, I found myself in a tolerable condition for undertaking the dangers and fatigues of the road. And this, notwithstanding that it was now the rainy season, and the dreary month of January; and the probability of my being impeded by the swollen rivers, and exposed to the absence of all respect for travellers amongst the hostile armies of the Generals Urquiza and Rosas, who were about to come to an engagement on the plains of Buenos Ayres. After having taken leave of my numerous friends, a party of whom escorted me on horseback for more than a league on my journey, I bade a last adieu to the city of Chuquisaca, the fair capital of the Republic of Bolivia.

My road for some distance lay in the dry bed of a river, following the course of which I passed through a most agreeable tract of country, in which were dispersed several *quintas*, or bathing residences, belonging to the good people of Chuquisaca, as well as several large *estancias*, with their usual appurtenances. As I journeyed along, a slight dulness hung upon my spirits at the thought of leaving, perhaps for ever, a place endeared to me by many ties of enduring friendship, and where I had beguiled many a pleasant hour in the society of those I loved and honoured. My thoughts, however, were soon diverted from such reminiscences, and the painful feelings they occasioned in my mind, by a *rencontre* with a party of young ladies, whose acquaintance I had made in the city whence I was now taking my departure. Accompanied by their parents and a retinue of servants, they were returning to the capital, after a long visit to a distant estate, with smiling faces and the anticipation of a renewal of those pleasant scenes in which they had formerly participated. The opportunity, so unexpected,

which now offered itself, of wishing me a hearty farewell ere I finally turned my back on this hospitable country, was eagerly seized, and with many kind wishes for a prosperous journey to myself and cavalcade, my good friends left me to pursue my way alone, and indulge in my solitary contemplations.

The road now leaving the river bed, and taking the direction of a gradual slope on one side of the valley, the ruins of an old post-house were passed, and several herds of asses, laden with bales from Potosi, and accompanied by their Indian drovers, broke the monotony of the way. Having sent on the luggage mules, Battista and myself drew in rein at an excellent post-house which presented itself; and, having entered the large court-yard, slackened the girths of our animals, and seen them well baited, we began to look after ourselves, and make arrangements for our own creature comforts. The postmaster, an intelligent man, with a fine open countenance, was nearly bent double with rheumatism; and, entertaining the common opinion amongst the ignorant

country people that all foreigners are doctors, would insist on my prescribing for his malady, offering me money, or anything else that his house afforded, if I would but procure him relief from his sufferings.

Not wishing to disabuse his mind of so harmless a delusion, I brought out from my stores a mixture which I had for sprains, and, "mine host," on its first application, pronounced himself so much better, that I was not sorry to have tried the experiment of palming myself off upon him as a veritable doctor. At all events, my unexpected success was only another proof of the intimate relation between mind and body, and of the strange influence exercised upon the functions of the latter by the force of imagination. We now partook of some *chichia*, a peculiar drink of the country, and some bread and cheese; and, finding our strength greatly recruited, we took our leave of my convalescent patient, amidst a perfect shower of benedictions, and were soon again toiling along a hot and dusty road.

After a ride which afforded little variety of scenery, we reached the post of El Puerto

Cadimago before sunset, where I had the good fortune to seize on the vacant furnished room, which I should rather call unfurnished, as it contained nothing more than the *adobe* table, and recesses, formed in the building. Another party, consisting of three men, who, from their appearance, seemed very undesirable *compagnons de voyage*, were obliged to take up their quarters and put up with every possible inconvenience in a shed close by. I called the postmaster, and insisted upon having my room swept out, and afterwards accompanied him to procure my *cebada*, for which I was charged the enormous rate of fourteen royals per quintal. Finding that the house failed to furnish us with more than a few eggs, I found it necessary to have recourse to my own stock of provisions, and in a very short time my cook had provided me an excellent dinner.

The room which we occupied being *minus* the usual appendage of a door, I was awoke in the night by a troop of dogs, who invaded the apartment, and threatened to carry off the remnants of our feast. As I liked neither their intrusion at this unseasonable

hour, nor the predatory habits in which they were fain to indulge, I got up and administered to them some wholesome chastisement, which had the effect of enabling me to pass the remainder of the night in quiet. By break of day our fellow-travellers were on foot, so I awoke Battista, and we began to get ready for a start; and, everything being completed, we were again in saddle, with just light sufficient to enable us to discern our way. As time wore on, and objects became more distinct, the ground on one side of the road appeared scattered with large fragments of broken rock, whilst the green mounds on the other showed perfect forests of peaked rocks standing on end, chiefly covered with a dark green coating of moss, and representing the most extraordinary and grotesque shapes imaginable. Having passed through this scene, our attention was attracted by the stern gaze of an eagle or vulture, who watched all our movements, and then darting into the air, rose aloft till lost in the glittering beams of the morning sun.

The post of Chuchiwassi being at hand, I suffered my baggage mules to pass on, and

remained behind with Battista to partake of some breakfast. An excellent omelet, a cup of chocolate, and some *foie gras*, rendered us fit to face again the heat and fatigue of a long day's journey. The post contained a very comfortable room for travellers, possessing the luxury of a door and window covered with hide, a thing not often to be met with in these localities. A little shop was attached to this establishment, where sundry delicacies were procurable—a perfect godsend to the poor famished muleteer. As our day had commenced so early, we contrived to make considerable progress. We entered by an angular cut into a *cabrada* of unusual width, having a very rocky and lowering aspect, the strata of various hues running in curves in all directions, whilst in a strong and rapid current the river wound its course round fragments of rocks detached from the neighbouring cliffs. Alternately passing over craggy precipices and the gravelly bed of the river, we gradually picked our way, and then beheld, on a slight elevation, the neat and clean-looking post of Lagunillas, with its trim garden and cultivated grounds. As we arrived in the vicinity of the place we ob-

served a little bustle amongst some neatly-attired young people, who had noticed our approach, but they were disappointed in their expectations of having a nearer gaze at us, for we passed on without making any stay.

The *lagunillas*, or small lakes in the neighbourhood, are greatly visited by sporting gentlemen who recreate here for a few days at certain seasons of the year, and generally take up their quarters at the post, on account of the superior accommodation to be met with there. Issuing from the *cabrada*, a beautiful little lake presented itself, surrounded by a circle of hills, amongst which it reposed like a mirror, whilst many of its feathered inhabitants glided along its shining surface, or rose in detachments with a noisy clatter, as we slowly approached their secluded haunts. On the margin of the waters, and in very close proximity, were several houses, no doubt frequented by the votaries of the chase. We were confirmed in this opinion by observing several men of a superior class, who had just dismounted, and were about to enter them.

Passing from this quiet scene, the country

opens into a wide and extended landscape, the winding stream continuing its course amidst green and rich pastures, and knolls, well wooded in all the luxuriant beauty of the wet season, surrounding several *haciendas*, which here appear in greater abundance than is generally the case in these thinly populated districts. After a long day's ride, every house which appeared in the distance filled us with the hope that it was the wished-for post, and finding our mistake as we advanced, we rode up to every Indian that we saw upon the road, and were still doomed to the disappointment of being told that the object of our search was at least two leagues further.*

* I may here remark, that the natives of the country have for the most part very vague ideas of distance. I have been told again and again, by different persons, that a place to which I was bound was two or three leagues off, and have found in the end that I have been nearly half a day in reaching it. This continual postponement of the desired release from the fatigue and constraint of a journey on horseback, is peculiarly trying. The effect of travelling for a long distance on horseback is seldom felt for the first or second day; but, after that, a stiffness comes on, and any little inequality or bad arrangement in the saddle or equipment is sensibly felt.

However, to our great joy, on the opposite side of a partly dry water-course, or river bed, our anticipations were at length realized in finding that we had alighted upon the post of Bartolo.

This post numbers several buildings, surrounding a large quadrangle, with a shop for necessaries and a good supply of forage, at a reasonable price. I here met with a young pursuivant of General Belza; and from him I learnt that the General had made his first public entry into Potosi since his recovery from the effects of his attempted assassination, and that the people of that city were celebrating the event with processions, bull-fights, and fireworks. I passed several agreeable hours with this young gentleman, who was travelling with his guitar *en troubadour*, and who sang and played till the hour of rest, to an audience of muleteers, Indians, and Choloes.

Soon after daybreak, I bade adieu to my friend of the previous evening, and was again in motion. Our journey this day lay through a flat and uninteresting tract of country,—for the most part, a kind of potteries, con-

nected with the town of Puna. This town has a very pleasing appearance. It contains a good Plaza and church, together with a tolerable sprinkling of decent shops, where fruits and many luxuries not often to be met with, are easily procured. Fixing my quarters at the *posada*, or hotel, I took possession of a large room, which I gave orders to have well swept out. A woman then presented herself, and offered to make me some *cupi* (a kind of Irish stew), compelling me to pay in advance, as, perhaps, I had a roguish look about me which did not entirely meet with her approbation. Having found three stones in the yard, she placed some fuel under them, and then the pot on the top, and in the course of an hour I had my dinner cooked under my very nose.

The meal was scarcely swallowed, when my two *herreros* came in with the doleful news that no provender was to be had for our animals. These men possess one very good quality, and that is, that they never take any food or rest for themselves, under any circumstances whatever, till their animals are duly provided for. This, perhaps, is

more a necessity on their part than a virtue, as their living depends exclusively upon the condition of their beasts. Finding how matters stood, I sent at once for the *corregidor*, who soon presented himself, and confirmed the truth of the story I had just heard, telling me that the foragers of the cavalry, attendant on the General, had laid an embargo on the whole of the *cebada* and food for animals which they could find, in the name of the Government, thus leaving chance travellers to shift for themselves as best they could. However, the *corregidor* was kind enough to let me have two quintals of corn out of his own store, for which I paid him most liberally. My poor animals, who, to the sorrow of my two *herreros*, had had a banyan time of it, after all the fatigues of the day, now made up for lost time, and on the following morning we were all in a condition to start afresh on our journey.

By break of day we were again *en route;* and, as I rode along, I was much interested in observing the natives engaged in the manufactures peculiar to this part of the country. The ingenuity with which the

Indian overcomes a host of difficulties, was to me most surprising. Without tools, and solely by his hands, he works the clayey soil, and models wares of all sizes; and turns them out, if not altogether graceful articles, at least durable ones. The character of the ground during the day presented several varieties of that peculiar earth which is adapted to pottery purposes. After rather a monotonous ride, the post of Bellin was reached; and having selected my little room, a comfortable meal was prepared me by Battista, from my own stock of provisions, after which the master of the post made his appearance, and, as afterwards proved the case, to my great annoyance. He was one of those persons sometimes to be met with even in more civilized parts of the world, who have always an appetite for anything good to eat that comes in their way, and form a ready acquaintance with a bottle, never leaving it till they have completely drained it dry. This fellow carried his propensity to a greater extent than I had ever seen. He not only put his dirty fingers into my dish, drank out of my bottle with the

greatest *nonchalance*, and smoked my cigars as coolly as if they were his own; but actually appropriated the bottle, when he had helped largely to diminish its contents. In fact, he monopolized everything; and in place of paying any attention to my constant rebukes, he bothered me with a volume of stupid questions, and at last put me out of all patience.

Disgusted with his conduct, and more particularly so, as he had done me so completely out of my dinner, I told Battista, privately, to get me a bottle of *pisco*. This was placed before my tormentor, who soon became dead-drunk, measured his full length upon the floor, and snored away like a pig. I now took up my gun, and went out for a ramble; but, on returning, found the postmaster as I had left him, and still sound asleep. Thinking that we might now as well rid ourselves of his company, Battista and myself carried him away, neck and crop, and bundled him into a sort of shed, hard by, where we left him to recover, at his leisure, from the effects of his debauch.

The next day we started off, under a blue

sky, the bright rays of a tropical sun lighting up as extraordinary a scene as I ever witnessed. Two *cordons* of mountains, which had become visible during our journey of the previous day, began now, as we left the post, to be more distinctly marked, and their bold outlines were clearly perceptible, as they gradually closed in around a plain covered with wildwood and aromatic shrubs. Large rocks, detached by some convulsion of nature from their original positions, were standing in a group, and bore some resemblance to the Druidical remains of Stonehenge on a large scale, affording a safe retreat to man and beast in tempestuous weather. The ground in the neighbourhood was intersected by numerous streamlets, issuing from springs, and around them the shrewd Indian had taken care to cultivate many a field of maize and waving *cebada*. The sides of the mountain-pass presented primitive rocks of granite, and the various *strata* appeared impregnated with the several metals which had long lain dormant within their bosom. From the shelving ledges and peaks of the rock, the trees, that nervously grasped their hard

bed, where a thin crust of earth afforded their only nourishment, spread their overhanging branches in strange and fitful shapes, and threatened every moment to overwhelm the passing traveller.

As we advanced further into the ravine, the exuberance of vegetation increased at every step, the steep and rugged sides almost meeting over our heads, whilst deep at their base, the gulleys furrowed by the mountain cataracts rendered travelling attended with uncertainty and danger. As we pursued our slender track between the walled barriers on either side, we had to climb over fragments of pointed rocks, sometimes as smooth as a glacier. Then we wended our way along the intricacies of numerous peaks several hundred feet in height, with bare room to pass along rough-hewn steps, two or three feet apart; and by the very effort of my poor beast to rise or descend according to the nature of the path, I was in continual danger of having my limbs broken, or of being hurled from my saddle to the depths beneath.

At other times I had to pass over large

surfaces of stone, of twelve or fourteen feet in width, the edges being broken off at an inclined angle, and presenting as perfect a plane as if chiseled by the mason's hand. In these cases, it was wonderful how the instinct of danger in my mule, as well as his tenacious mode of footing, and exactness of balance, sufficed to carry me safely through the dangers which beset me on every hand. The path would occasionally follow a steep ascent, along a road strewn with broken fragments of stone, mixed with pieces of iron, or greatly impregnated with that metal. These would give way under the foot, and roll downwards, much to the terror and alarm of such as happened to be immediately following in the same route. At length, after many a struggle and many a pause, all dangers were surmounted, and we found ourselves standing on the summit of this ample range. The view on all sides, from this point, was wonderfully grand. The prominent peaks of the several hills, at different elevations, some of which were lost in the hazy clouds that hung upon their lofty heads, seemed to resemble a beautifully delineated chart.

Casting my eyes towards the opposite side of the mountain-range, I was astonished at the extraordinary depth of the plain beneath, forming one of those stupendous *plateaux* of land which are situated between Bolivia and the adjoining provinces of the Argentine Republic. The descent into this region presented to the anxious gaze of our party an accumulation of dangers and horrors which it is very difficult to depict in words. It consisted of rude steps, hewn out from the solid rock, at a most inconvenient and appalling distance from each other, and winding around solid blocks of stone in every possible variety of intricate turning, making the traveller giddy and confused, as he sees on the brink of the yawning precipice at his side, merely a few stones piled upon each other, to mark the boundary between himself and eternity. My mule made two or three slips, and miraculously saved himself by coming with his four feet all of a heap within an inch of the chasm; and in addition to the terror with which my precarious position, and the sudden jerk, which might have proved fatal to us both, inspired me, I was

made more sensible of my danger by the noise of the little balustrade of stones rolling over the cliff, and cutting the air with a whistling sound ere they reached the depths beneath, when the report, as of a piece of ordnance, as they each in succession struck the earth, was echoed and re-echoed from every cavern and subterranean channel.

I was persuaded by experience that the best and safest mode of making an ascent or a descent in passing along these terrific scenes, was to close my eyes, and having given my mule free bridle, to rely solely upon his sagacity for overcoming every danger. I did so upon this occasion, but not before I had taken a glance at the scene beneath me, and had noticed many a little wooden cross, resting on a pyramid of stones, which marked the spot where some unfortunate traveller had met his fate. This was no cheering view; but as my eye wandered along the large and rugged rocks which were many feet in altitude, and in many instances rent asunder by some fierce mountain torrent, I could discern, at the very bottom of the picture, enclosed in this rude frame of nature,

and in beautiful contrast with its savage wildness, a peaceful little Indian village, surrounded with all its rustic charms, and exhibiting its neat gardens, and pastures well stocked with sheep, browsing in quiet security. Closing my eyes, in order to shut out from my mind as much as possible all sense of danger, how I longed to be beside them! But all things have an end; and in process of time, I found that I had made the descent in safety, and was once more on level ground, and partaking with much relish and satisfaction from a horn of water with which a comely Indian mother, who sat near her dwelling, surrounded by her chubby little family, most kindly provided me.

We now left the range of hills, and pursued our way across the country to the banks of a large river, or rather of what might claim that appellation after the heavy rains which fall at the usual season of the year. Along the vast bed, a shallow stream was now running at a very rapid rate. Continuing our course in the direction of the river, we passed several

well-cultivated gardens and fields filled with abundant crops, due to the Indian's assiduous industry. With great ingenuity he constructs tier after tier of patches of ground, which are well irrigated by means of water-channels, destined to convey to the soil those liquid treasures which in these parts are the very life and soul of husbandry. Passing several small villages agreeably situated amidst young woods and waving crops, we continued on until the river passes along a steep slope, descending with great rapidity under the cliffs which now stand out higher and bolder. It then divides, and pursues two distinct courses. As we advanced, the little town of Caisa presented itself, hidden in a recess, and consisting of a Plaza, church, parsonage-house, and a number of mud-houses.

The post was rather a superior building, and under the superintendence of a very intelligent man, half soldier and half farmer, who had been married to a remarkably pretty little woman, who appeared dressed out after the most approved European fashion. She, in company with her husband, was

just putting her foot in the stirrup in order to pay a visit to Potosi, and take a part in the festivities by which the visit of General Belza to that city were at that time being celebrated. Fortunately, we entered the house before they set off, and I was enabled to procure a supply of bread, newly baked, and also ten or twelve quintals of dry *cebada*. I determined to sojourn at this place for a day or two, in order to give my animals a little rest and dry food, and sent one of my *herreros* to bargain for the purchase of a sheep. Not being successful, I made him order the *corregidor* to get me one, as my passport strongly enjoined all postmasters, *corregidors*, and other functionaries, to render me every assistance in their power, and to provide me with all necessaries of which I might stand in need.

The *corregidor* himself soon appeared, with an Indian woman carrying a small sheep. The woman cried most piteously, and supplicated us most eagerly to spare her lamb. I asked her how much it was worth. She said four reals, upon which I offered her eight; and, as I put the dollar into her hand,

her lamentations became louder and louder over the dire bereavement to which she was exposed. However, as she stuck by the money, the *corregidor* and myself tugged away at the lamb, and it was as much as our united efforts could accomplish to succeed in the capture of our mutton.*

After dinner I watched the arrival of about forty Indian women, and soon afterwards two troops of asses, laden with fire-wood and jars, made their appearance, escorted by twenty Indians. In a few minutes the court-yard was in a state of bustle and confusion; the asses being divested of their burdens—the bundles of wood which they carried were piled about in all directions, and furnished some fifteen or twenty fires, large earthen jars filled with water being placed over them to boil. Two or three women who were attending to

* It is a singular circumstance that, although these Indian women often possess flocks of sheep numbering several hundreds, it is difficult in many cases to persuade them to part with a single one. These people often pass month after month without partaking of a particle of animal food, although literally surrounded with it. They only do so whenever a sheep or a lamb dies, in which case a feast is immediately made of the carcase.

these operations, were continually throwing into these jars small balls of triturated maize, which was then stirred up with a wooden spoon. The night having set in rather dark, the glare of the numerous fires, and the forms flitting about amongst them, resembled a gipsy encampment, and produced a very picturesque effect.

This scene continued throughout the night; the process which was carried on being the manufacture of *chichia;* and as three days and three nights are requisite properly to complete it, any neglect on the part of those engaged in it is very apt to injure the quality of the liquor. After watching them for some time I retired to rest, and after the enjoyment of some refreshing repose, and a comfortable breakfast on the following morning, I returned again to observe the progress made by the *chichia* makers. I was informed that the expense of this affair was defrayed by a rich landed proprietor, who was about to give a grand *fete,* which was to last for several days, during which he would regale the numerous Indians upon his estate according to annual

custom. During the continuance of this *fete* eating, drinking, and dancing are carried to a great extent, and many are reduced to a state of beastly intoxication, both sexes generally quarrelling and fighting until they are entirely prostrated by the effects of this general debauch. After an agreeable ramble with my fowling-piece, during which I filled my pockets with turtle doves, which formed an admirable adjunct to the stew I had ordered, I retired early to bed, and on the following day we bade adieu to Caisa.

On leaving this town we returned to the bed of the river, and followed its numerous windings, as the beautiful cactus reared its white head on each side of the way. Being provided with first-rate animals, Battista and myself thought to be very clever, and pushed on as fast as we were able, in order to arrive at the next post before our guides and baggage. We imagined that there could be no mistake about the road, but had not started off together very long, when we found that it diverged in two opposite directions, and there we stood looking at each other, and then at the roads, consulting together,

and sustaining the several arguments for each. As ill-fate would have it, we at last took the wrong one, as we found out to our cost, for we had the pleasure of riding six or eight leagues for nothing. We had wandered about for some hours, when we found ourselves again in the bed of the river, and saw, to our joy, on one of its steep banks a village and its church. As we approached it, the ringing of many bells, and the assemblage of a vast concourse of persons in all directions proclaimed a *fete.*

Riding up to a building that had all the appearance of a post-house, I inquired if this were the village or post of Quirbe. Around the open *porte cocher* were loitering a crowd of as ill-looking and cut-throat a set of fellows as I ever beheld. More or less intoxicated, they were quarrelling and gambling to a fearful extent, their poor horses being picketed here and there around the building. I was about to repeat my question, when three or four of these fellows sallied forth from the portal, seized hold of the bridle of my horse, and, in place of satisfying my demand, insisted upon my instantly showing

them my passport. I thought it prudent to comply with this request, taking the precaution to hold the document in my hand. Having done so, I peremptorily ordered them to take their hands off my horse, which, not being complied with on the instant, I partially drew my sword from its scabbard and set spurs to my steed. This example was immediately followed by Battista, and away we went, leaving the group to hasten after us, or leave it alone, as they might think fit. After watching us for some time, they adopted the latter course, probably considering that it would be the safer for them in the end.

Pulling in our reins, when fairly out of their reach, we found ourselves about as wise as before relative to the road to Quirbe. At this juncture we were fortunate enough to overtake an Indian, whom, in consideration of a small piece of money, we were enabled to enlist in our service. He undertook to put us in the right road, and soon after we had placed ourselves under his guidance we entered upon an open tract of country, in which I could trace several homesteads

shaded with trees. I immediately inquired of our guide if he could point me out the post, upon which he answered me in one of the primitive languages of Peru, at the same time shaking his head, giving me to understand that it was not in sight. After crossing the bed of a river we were met by a man mounted on a white horse, who politely bowed to us, and on entering into conversation with him we discovered him to be the master of the very post of which we were in search.

"First catch your hare," as Mrs. Glass well remarks. We thought ourselves now quite secure of our game, and promised ourselves, in a short time, all the bodily comforts for the enjoyment of which our long ride had well qualified us. Accordingly we dismissed our Indian guide, and joined company with our friend of the post, who informed us that he had just returned from the *fête*, where he had been much entertained by the fun and amusement which it had afforded. He gave us a full account of all he had seen, the dancing of the Indian women, dressed out in their gala costume, under garlands and fes-

toons of flowers which had been hung around the church—the horse-racing of the men for prizes,—several fights, and gambling in all its varieties; but that which seemed to have given him the greatest delight, was the sight of whole parties of men, women, and children reeling about under the effects of liquor.

As we advanced, my friend expatiated largely upon the accommodation which his house afforded; but judge of my surprise, when, after crossing some fields of maize, and arriving at some detached huts, with rooms hardly large enough to swing a cat in, he introduced me to them as his premises. One was occupied by the post-master, his wife, and numerous progeny; another by his stock in trade, consisting chiefly of *Aparachos* (pads and mule trappings); and the third was now to be devoted to myself.

On my arrival I was too hungry to notice anything till I had taken some dinner; but after having partaken of a savoury meal, prepared by Battista with materials selected from my stock, and the side of a sheep,

deliciously grilled, I was enabled to survey my apartment at leisure. The rafters of the room attracted my particular attention. On close examination they turned out to be composed of the wood or dried pith of the cactus. This wood is of a yellowish hue, and perforated all over with small holes like a honeycomb—though sufficiently strong for the purpose to which it was applied. I admired the ingenuity of these people, who have learnt to turn everything to some profitable use, and even the scarcity of wood is not felt, when they can so readily make use of so apparently unpromising a material in its place. Candles being lighted and beds made, in one of which I took up my position, and regaled myself with a cup of tea and a cigar, I prepared myself for some refreshing rest, thanking my stars for having led me to these quarters, such as they were.

I had scarcely closed my eyes, as a prelude to some delightful dream, to the charms of which I had resigned myself, and the candles had been extinguished, when, lo and behold, a quantity of strange things came tumbling down upon my face, and the bed in which I

lay. I could distinctly hear the noise they made in falling, but it was too dark for me to distinguish what it was that had so inopportunely broken in upon my repose. My first impulse was to call Battista, who, I found, was sitting up in bed, and wondering, like myself, at the strange thing that had happened. The next moment I began to cry out with pain, feeling myself bitten all over. My companion did the same, and as we jumped about from the agony we experienced, we came in contact with each other with such force (it being completely dark), that we knocked each other down, throwing over, in the scuffle, the candles and other articles which came in our way. The noise we had occasioned alarmed my *herreros*, who rushed into the room with sword and pistol in hand, and carrying a light.

The scene which presented itself was most astounding. Every hole in the cactus roof was besieged by troops of *Bichuchos*.*

* This insect resembles in colour a black beetle. It is somewhat less in size, and armed with large tusks or fangs. It is very quick in its movements, and subsists entirely upon human blood.

Hundreds had forced their way into the room, and owing to my sitting position, had found their way under the bed-clothes, and were actually eating me up. Thinking it best to leave them in possession of the apartment they had so unceremoniously invaded, I hastily seized my garments, and was dressed in a very short space of time. Then having gone out into the open air, taking my saddle for a pillow, and spreading a *poncho* for my bed, I lay down upon the cold ground, and slept as well as I could under the circumstances. Rising by break of day, I called my servants together, and with no pleasing reminiscences of the post of Quirbe, or my adventure of the previous night, I bade adieu to it without regret.

A few leagues from this place the country presents a perfect forest of underwood, the trees all appearing of a stunted growth. We passed several asses laden with pears, which proved quite a God-send. We purchased an abundant supply, and munched away at them as we continued our journey. The scene soon began very visibly to change its character, and we entered upon a plain

covered with short underwood, and skirted on each side by enormous cliffs. In front lay a beautiful champagne country, to arrive at which we had to cross a clear, broad, but shallow stream. On the other side stands the picturesque town of Santiago de Cotagaite. At this place I was overtaken by two officers, well mounted, who proved to be friends whom I had previously known at La Paz. The license of the road and the recollections of our former acquaintance, put us on the very best of terms, and the *rencontre* was most agreeable to us all. They heartily responded to my imprecations upon the post of Quirbe, informing me that several persons had suffered as I had done, and that the place was generally at night time avoided as the plague, though occasionally resorted to during the day for the purpose of baiting cattle. We were about to enter upon general topics, when two or three slight indications forewarned us of a coming storm. There was a general buzz of insects, that seemed hurrying to and fro in great bewilderment. Every breath of air had long since ceased, and yet at intervals low murmuring sounds

appeared to roll along the earth. The clouds hung in heavy masses, and a sulphurous odour pervaded the atmosphere.

My friends loosened their ponchos, and covered over their bodies, advising that we should gallop at full speed towards Cotagaite. This was no sooner said than off we started, but had not proceeded far before a line of silvery light shot across the road before us, and as quick as thought the opposite cliff, consisting of a block of stone of many hundred tons in weight, was shivered into a thousand pieces. At the same moment the thunder burst over our heads, booming and vibrating in all directions, the sound of which, mingling with the loud noise occasioned by the falling fragments of rocks, produced a most deafening effect, and added considerably to the terror of the scene. In a few seconds a deluge of water came down upon our devoted heads, and our animals, in spite of spur or entreaty, ran under the trees and turned their backs upon the storm. Our shelter was too slight effectually to screen us against the effects of the rain; but, drenched as we were, we endeavoured to make a fresh start, as the storm travelled

quickly a-head. The rain, however, continued with unabating fury; but on we urged, our steeds crossing with some difficulty the river, which had now become considerably swollen from the many cataracts which had been formed in the neighbouring hills.

On arriving at the town we galloped into the Plaza, where we found, as well as in the adjoining streets, a perfect sheet of rushing water. I was conducted by my companions to the post, a large, and I may even say, a magnificent building; for, without any exception, it was the best house of the sort that I had ever met with in Bolivia. A commodious well-papered room, furnished with tables and two bedsteads, promised us a more agreeable night's rest than we had experienced at our last place of stoppage. The dinner almost bordered on profusion. There was *chupe*, grilled fowl, lamb, and sweetmeats; and we enjoyed these delicacies with so much relish that we quite forgot our ducking. A young gentleman, son of a rich landed proprietor in the department, who possessed several valuable estates in the neighbourhood of this town, offered me his services in any way

that might be desirable. So pressing was he in his civilities, that I was at last obliged to accept a box of cigars at his hands. He likewise gave me a note to a certain postmaster, on the road, who was one of his dependants, requiring him to give me the best information as to the route I should take, it being given out that on the road to Tupisa the waters were so high as to destroy all land-marks.

The next morning, thoroughly refreshed, after a breakfast of chocolate and eggs, we mounted our horses in excellent condition. From the circumstances under which I entered the town of Santiago de Cotagaite, and the hasty visit which I made there, I am unable to give the reader any idea of its general aspect. On leaving it, however, I passed through several broad streets lined with superior houses, and near to a capacious Plaza and imposing cathedral. We were soon beyond the precincts of the town, and having arrived at a homestead situated in the midst of much cultivated ground, I delivered my credentials to the postmaster, a little, thick-set, talkative, and important-

looking individual, who sat lounging in a chair, and smoking under the shade of some fig-trees. Having read the letter, he jumped up and became all at once very obsequious, observing that he had expected us for some days, and hoped that we would remain and partake of his hospitality. However, as I had determined to proceed without making any further stay, he mounted a mule which was already saddled, and accompanied me for a short distance, in order to put myself and my servants in the right track.

He informed me of the swollen state of the rivers, and detailed several serious accidents that had happened in the vicinity, from the unusual rise of the waters, many of which had been attended with loss of life. Having counselled me to avoid the city of Tupisa and make a bold cut for the frontier, and pointed out several other particulars of the route that I should take, he respectfully withdrew, leaving myself and party to find our way as best we could, according to his directions.

The country now assumed a very hilly character, and a series of precipitous and

winding ascents and descents formed the principal features of the scene. The sides of the mountains soon exhibited a very fresh and green aspect; the storms which accompany the rainy season having now set in, and which visit this district regularly every day about four o'clock in the afternoon. It was about this time of the day when—the thunder rolling, and the rain descending in torrents—our cargo-mules reached the top of an embankment and commenced their descent towards the river beneath, which ran at a depth of a hundred feet or more. The road at this part was composed of a sort of earth called *grada*, which, when wet, is extremely slimy and slippery. The moment the poor animals, three in number, had placed foot on it, the character of the soil and the weight of their loads made them slide over from the top nearly to the bottom, turning a complete somersault in the air and alighting on their backs, much to the detriment of the trunks and wares which they carried. The scene was ludicrous enough, if one could but divest oneself of the idea of the pain the poor creatures were suffering.

The *herrero* no sooner saw his valuable mules starting off at this rapid rate than he sprang from his horse and prepared to follow, forgetting, in his anxiety to save his beasts, the slippery nature of the ground. Having placed his feet on the declivity, away he went, now sliding on his back, now walking upright, at other times almost on all fours, but describing in his descent all manner of antics in order to save himself, amidst the peals of laughter of myself and Battista, although we were, in reality, seriously concerned at the danger to which he had exposed himself. Just at this moment, an Indian woman, who had witnessed the scene, screamed out to us and pointed out a deep gully at hand, which I saw at once was accessible, and although it was more easy for an Indian than for a European to arrive at it, I contrived, by dint of spur and grumbling, to urge on my horse, who scrambled down by a series of jumps and sliding, till we found ourselves safe in the place indicated—a sort of trough worn by the waters, in some parts scarcely wide enough to enable us to avoid, without dodging, the abrupt and

pointed projections to be met with in the tortuous course.

After following a slight declivity, we found that we had at last arrived at the river's bed, and Battista and myself were congratulating ourselves upon our safe descent into a place of security, when a rushing sound, like the roaring of the ocean, caught our ears, and presently a gust of wind forced its passage to where we stood, accompanied by subterranean reports, which accumulated every moment. Our horses became so terrified that they were quite unmanageable. Battista and myself were carried we knew not where. The animal which I rode jumped up a side of rock almost perpendicular, and thence scrambled to a ledge, where I contrived to hold him in, trembling and snorting. The curious phenomenon was then explained. The heavy rains which had of late deluged the country around, and particularly the previous storm, had caused such an accumulation of water in the neighbouring mountains, that it had swept along the plains beneath till it had reached this chasm; then, with the fury

of a cataract, it had rushed in a fearful body, carrying along before it stones, branches, or any other obstacles that impeded its course.

I looked forth from my perch with anything but satisfaction on the increasing tide, which whirled with a vehemence indescribable, foaming and splashing, but, worst of all, increasing to within a few feet of the station where I had planted myself. The thought of being drowned without a chance of succour in this secluded spot in the wilds of Bolivia, far from the country of my birth, with no friend near to heed or pity me, took full possession of my mind. These painful reflections damped my spirits for a time, but I was soon cheered when I looked abroad and fancied that the noise of the rushing waters was abating. It was happily true—the dashing waves were gradually subsiding, and I saw before me the hope of a release. I thanked God and took courage, and after a time ventured to dismount, and having carefully led my horse down the declivity, waded along the shallow stream. I now beheld Battista seated, like a crow, on a projecting stump. His mule had made her way half up

the cliff, and was quietly eating on a little *plateau*, occasionally leaving off to catch a glance at her master. It is worthy of observation that these animals, after having been ridden for some time, show an extraordinary attachment to their masters, which they evince by many a curious trait of sagacious instinct.

Descending from our exalted position, we jointly managed with some difficulty to get possession of the mule, and ultimately landed her safely, where she could find some firm footing. After this, issuing into the bed of the river, we began to breathe more freely and laugh at our former fright. We soon encountered some Indians, who informed us that they had seen our men and baggage, and that they were slowly advancing towards the next post. Following a road which led for some distance along a high embankment at the side of the river, we came across two large plantations, encompassed by mud walls, where the appearance of the crops betokened much care and skill in husbandry. This gave us an assurance that our journey for the day was nearly ended; but still we saw no *hacienda*, and had to trudge on, hoping every moment to catch sight of some

welcome asylum after our dangers and fatigues.

Having wandered from the river in search of the domicile we made so sure of, we found ourselves, after a short time, again close to its banks. It had in this part extended itself to a kind of lake, and was covered with wild ducks. Feeling inclined to secure something in this uncertain country, Battista and myself loosened our guns, and in three or four shots we contrived to make ourselves masters of several fine birds. As we advanced after this, the great object of our wishes at length came in sight. The *hacienda* of Moncharachi, newly built, or at least recently repaired, offered us its welcome shelter. We were shown into one of the rooms that had just been finished, and was beautifully whitewashed and plastered. It was paved with bricks, and had commodious benches. Adjoining was a comfortable bedroom, and a smaller dormitory for my companion. The *major-domo* of this large establishment was a black, who paid us every attention, providing us with an excellent dinner and forage for the animals, and all at a very trifling expense.

At this place we were joined by our lost mules and baggage, none the worse for the disaster they had met with. Here we contrived to pass a very jolly evening, and in the morning arose in pretty good time for the prosecution of our journey. At first starting we had to follow along the base of a range of high hills, with the dry bed of a river on the other side, in which a spring murmured, as its crystal water sparkled in the sun's rays. Large trunks of trees and shrubs formed little islands and peninsulas, and here and there a slip of the alluvial soil had given rise to natural gardens, in which flowers and aromatic shrubs shed their fragrance on the surrounding air. An aperture in the hills through which our path led, soon brought us into an extensive plain covered with underwood, and gradually sloping downwards as far as the broad river of Nacareno. Numerous small farms, with their enclosed fields of maize, orchards, and gardens, covered the approaches and banks. The number of large wood-pigeons which flocked about amidst the maize was incredible. Allowing, therefore, our baggage to advance towards the ford, Battista and myself kept

up a little sport for some time, till our pockets were quite crammed with the fruits of our industry. Then, observing some men and horses fording the river in the distance, we were determined to follow in their track.

This river has an enormous breadth, and at its full must be wholly impassable. We were fortunate enough to find it in parts so shallow, that the bed was plainly visible, leaving here and there little streams of deep and rapid water, which it was necessary to ford carefully. Guiding our animals in an angular direction, the great body of water was avoided, and the opposite bank was reached. Our road now lay through wooded lanes, hedged in on each side by well planted fences. Fields of maize and *cebada*, and orchards and gardens, prolific in fruits, flowers, and vegetation, were met with in great profusion. The roads were remarkably good, and the several indications of active industry would bear a comparison even with some of the rural districts of England. The town of Nacareno is entered. Men and women, attired in their holiday dresses, and mounted on horseback, continually arrive,

the women being seated behind the men on the same horse. Booths are filled with gewgaws and finery, or useful implements and goods of various descriptions. Indian women are to be seen squatted on the ground, whilst before them are fires, over which hang suspended frying-pans and pots filled with their several savoury contents, which hissed and bubbled, and scattered their enticing odours far and wide.

Riding up to the post-house, the master of which was the justice of the peace, I found that learned functionary, together with the greater part of his assistants, in a state of the most beastly intoxication. This happened to be the *fete* of the patron saint of the place, and I immediately saw that I should have the greatest difficulty in enlisting any one in my service. Not being able to make anything of the chief magistrate, who endeavoured to embrace me whenever I put any question to him, and was continually calling upon a pretty young female with a child in her arms, and probably his wife, to procure him more drink, I sent for the Commandant—a smart, talkative young officer

—and asked him if I could by any possibility find food and lodging for myself and party.

This gentleman advised me most strongly not to remain in the place, as the people had been drunk for the last three days; but proposed to take me to the house of a friend of his, an Alquisil, at the distance of about three leagues further, where he promised that I should find every accommodation. Thinking this plan to be a good one, though tired and hungry myself, and my poor beasts and attendants much in the same condition, I immediately ordered them to advance, as the day was rapidly drawing to a close. My military companion managed, by incessant talking, to beguile many a weary league, for I was fully sensible that the distance mentioned by my guide had been long passed, when there was no symptom of our having arrived at our destination. The night set in dark and dreary, as star after star became hidden behind an opaque mass of clouds that had been gathering around. Distant peals of thunder announced one of those fearful storms, so common in the wet season, and of which I had already had painful experience.

Drawing my poncho close around me, in order the better to face the hurricane that was fast approaching, I found the darkness thicken at every step; and the fear of falling into some pit or chasm made me on the alert, as, after each succeeding flash of lightning had struck painfully on the sight, its intense brilliancy almost depriving me of the power of vision, I was left, after it had passed by, in a state of utter darkness, and obliged cautiously to grope my way. Following each other and our guide by a continual interchange of shouts, we passed from the main road into what seemed to be a very doubtful passage on the borders of a wood, amidst rocks, underwood, and a large number of streams, which flowed in all directions from the high land, at the bottom of which the forest spread its extensive range. The height had become so fearful, and the darkness so profound, that the young officer was quite at a loss how to find his way to a house which he told me he had, perhaps, visited a hundred times before. He exerted himself to the utmost to succeed in his object, scrambling up to the top of a hill, whenever he

beheld a light, in order to gain some information or a guide, and then hastening back to me to communicate the result of his errand.

The rain was, if possible, more violent than ever, when he returned to me with the joyful intelligence that the house was close at hand. We could discern some lights at a considerable height above, and were requested to follow the Indian guide as closely as possible. The Alquisil's house was situated on the brow of a hill, composed of rocky cliffs at the base; and through these a rough path wound its course, difficult enough at daytime and in fair weather, but, now that the intense darkness was only occasionally relieved by a passing flash of lightning, it was all but impracticable. Besides this, owing to the incessant rains during the night, the waters from the higher lands had so greatly accumulated that they only found vent by rushing impetuously over the hill's side, and formed furious cataracts along the steep rocky steps by which we had now to ascend. By the continual use of our spurs, and an occasional shouting, one after another

of our party managed to dash through this watery pass without more serious damage than a good wetting, which completely finished what the rain had begun.

We had now reached a place of safety. The Alquisil, his pretty daughter—whom I soon discovered to be the attraction which made our kind friend the Commandant so well acquainted with the locality—his wife, and another relation, received my military guide and myself with a hearty welcome. And this we thoroughly appreciated, although we were received into nothing better than a miserable mud hovel, two rooms of which were immediately placed at our disposal; and, as regards refreshment, a cup filled with a liquor half tea and half *cana* (a spirit distilled from the cane, and much above proof), was all that was offered us. However, as we had plenty of provisions of our own, this made little difference, and we found our host and his family very well disposed to join us in partaking of our humble meal. On the following day we hailed one of those bright mornings, unequalled in any other land, which the traveller so often meets with in

this country, and having thanked our friends for their hospitality, we finally bade them adieu.

Passing over a number of small hills which commanded an extensive view of a beautiful country, clothed in Nature's loveliest garb of green, we caught sight of a goodly town, with its church and Plaza, and neat houses, with walled gardens adjoining, filled with every variety of fruit and vegetable. The farm-houses in the suburbs, with their excellent pastures, in which sheep and horned cattle were grazed, invited us to draw in rein; but we did not do so, but continued our course along the plains, whose monotony became tedious, as league after league was passed, until at length the town of Mojo appeared in view, resting on its scathed and barren foundations. Its straggling and ruinous streets of mud-built houses badly whitewashed, and petty shops ill supplied with provisions, mark it as a place of little importance, although it bears a high repute for its *panaderos* and bread. I took up my quarters at the post-house, a little way out of the town; but the Commandant, a polite officer,

offered me a domicile for the night at his own quarters, as well as a dinner *à la militaire*, both which, for company's sake, I was very glad to accept.

Procuring a good supply of bread the next morning, I pushed on for the last post in Bolivia, before entering upon the provinces belonging to the Argentine Republic. We had risen with the lark, to pursue our way across plains which exhibited little variety, and after a tedious and short ride, we arrived at some *corrales* and cultivated fields. Near to these a small river marked the boundary of Bolivia, and in the vicinity stood the post of Laquica, consisting of a number of small tenements, forming the enclosure of a court-yard. The master, a tall, Quixotic, sedate-looking personage, assumed a very great air of importance, attributable, as I learnt, to his holding the office of justice of the peace. In these countries, this function is often bestowed upon men who can neither read nor write, and are incapacitated, through sheer ignorance, from properly performing the duties of their office. As is usually the case, their assurance and obstinacy keep pace with

their ignorance, and there is little chance of the latter being cured, so long as they adhere, with pig-headed tenacity, to any opinion, however absurd.

After having had our cattle well attended to, and partaken with considerable relish of a side of lamb, which I was fortunate enough to obtain, I asked his judgeship to join me in a glass of wine, to which he consented without hesitation. In the course of our conversation together, he informed me that a number of my countrymen (doctors, as he called them, according to the mistaken notion of the natives of these countries with regard to foreigners) had, from time to time, passed that way, and taken advantage of the shelter of his roof. He had offered ten dollars to one of them, if he would operate upon a wen which gave him a great deal of uneasiness, but that individual refused to make the attempt under twenty dollars, and therefore the incumbrance remained *in statu quo*. He hoped I would be more reasonable, and insisted that I should at once commence the operation; to which I demurred, telling him that all foreigners were not doctors; but to

no avail, so far as regards my attempt to disabuse his mind of the delusion under which he laboured. I now wished him good-night, in order to retire to my bed, and my would-be patient taking the hint, soon withdrew.

The next morning soon found us in the province of Salta, and after a long day, characterized by scarcely any variety of scene, three little mud Indian cottages represented the first post on the new territory on which I had entered. This was the post of Cangrecos, and the postmaster (as we should say in Ireland) consisted of an old woman, who, when I arrived, was very busy in sweeping out the room, and supplying fuel to the fire. The accommodation at this place was detestable, and I experienced a great want of comfort during my stay here. Whilst I was partaking of the meal which my hostess had provided me, an old Indian, who was, no doubt, the husband of the woman, made his appearance, took a seat in the middle of the room, and watched me as a cat would a mouse. He soon began to show a disposition to share with me several things with which I was

furnished, intimating his desire by certain very unequivocal signs.

Having complied with his exorbitant demands, I endeavoured to escape from his importunities by retiring to my bed; but this did not suffice to get rid of him, for he arranged his things with the utmost composure in the same room with me, and quietly betook himself to rest. At first Battista and myself proposed to carry him gently out, but upon reflection it occurred to us that it would be rather too bad to turn a man out of his own house. We therefore allowed him to remain, when he commenced snoring to such a degree, that it was past all endurance. We then resorted to the old remedies of whistling, coughing, and such like noises, and finding that the desirable result did not ensue, we began to throw about boots, and other articles that came to hand. Not one wink of sleep did we have during the whole of that live-long night, our companion being determined to annoy us in every possible way. We hailed the dawn, therefore, with unspeakable pleasure, and prepared to leav him to his own devices.

Before we took our departure, I saw a bargain struck between one of my *herreros* and a man who had been obliged to rough it on the outside of the house, with his horses, mules, and baggage. This individual exchanged away a splendid horse, which was merely a little lame from a sprain, for a small cob, which had been sold to my young man but a few days previously for six dollars. It appears that the other had taken a fancy to it, and actually, with merely a few dollars in addition, took it in exchange for a really valuable animal. I have often heard of the people of this country being possessed with these childish fancies, and of their making great sacrifices, in a pecuniary point of view, merely to satisfy some foolish whim. Having now arranged my cavalcade, and put everything into marching order, I left, without regret, the post of Cangrecos, heartily wishing never to see it more.

After travelling for some leagues, we reached the entrance of a rocky *cabrada*, with a rapid river running through its centre. The entrance was so narrow, and the appearance of the rocks so threatening, that much

danger was incurred in making way over the fragments that lay strewn upon the ground. After much rain, the *cabrada* is, in fact, impassable, but we contrived at last to obtain a fair footing, and passed through it without difficulty. On leaving it at the other side, the dry bed of the river extends to an enormous width, covered with pieces of rock, the stream being confined to one narrow channel, except where it is divided into forks, which again joined the parent stream further on in its course. Two well cultivated farms were passed, and numerous cottages with their gardens; and afterwards appeared in the distance, the colossal building of the *Tambo del negro muerto* (caravanseray of the dead negro).

This building, I was informed by the *major-domo*, a Spaniard, was erected by a company at Potosi, and the speculators expected to realize large fortunes by the various purposes to which the establishment was to be devoted. All the herds of cattle that could be collected from the adjoining provinces, were to be assembled here once a-year, and then a great slaughter was to take place; the hides to be tanned, and made

into leather, and the meat dried, and formed into *Charquè*, or *Chalones*, these being the only food generally to be met with in the mines that cover Bolivia, and articles in most general demand. The fat and grease were, likewise, to be melted down, and made into candles and soap for the same market. Besides this, the grounds belonging to the *hacienda*, being very extensive, were to be cultivated with *cebada*, and a large profit derived from its sale. The accommodation for travellers at the house was most excellent. It contained large stores of every good thing to tempt the appetite, as well as of several articles much in demand; and the proximity of this establishment to the Bolivian frontier encouraged the hopes of the speculators, and gave a great air of feasibility to their scheme. Should the French persevere in their contemplated exploration of the central rivers of South America, and more particularly of those of Bolivia, and discovering their navigation to be practicable, see the importance of fixing stations,—this *hacienda*, lying, as it does, exactly in the line of communication, would become a very necessary link in assisting the general traffic.

Having passed an agreeable evening in the society of the polite and intelligent Spaniard who had favoured me with the above detail, I retired to my comfortable apartment, regretting that there were no more of these establishments upon the road. By break of day I was again in saddle, and soon found myself in the river's bed between high rocky banks, which increased in altitude as we advanced. Everything resembling a tree or a shrub had completely vanished from the scene, and in their place appeared forests of cactus of every variety of size, some measuring even as much as twenty feet in height, and many of them, being in full bloom, exhibiting their beautiful flowers of crimson or pale blue. Following along by the base of the hills, several of which we crossed, we advanced towards a high mountain range, startling, as we proceeded, a herd of fifty or sixty *becunas*. Before I could loosen my rifle they had turned the corner of a hill in beautiful style, and having come up to another hilly brow, they stopped short, and turning round, stared boldly at me.

Although I was convinced that they were out of shot, I could not resist the temptation

of bringing my trusty Manton to bear upon them. However, it missed fire, and away they went again, leaving me to the indulgence of a hope of more successful sport another time. We now crossed the higher range of hills, and following in due course a lower level, we came to a regular defile, in the centre of which ran a watercourse, the drainage of the neighbouring slopes, which were beautiful with the fresh verdure with which they were plentifully covered. As I looked occasionally to the summits of the hills I could plainly behold little parties of *bedunas* quietly feeding, as if they knew by instinct that they were out of range.

On entering a valley which resolved itself into the adjoining plains, the elevation of the mountains gradually diminished. As we advanced, several cultivated patches of ground began to inform us of the near habitation of man. We passed several small clusters of underwood and clumps of prairie grass, the background presenting a high range of dark-looking rocks, at the base of which flowed a noisy river; and afterwards turning to the right, the pretty little town of Humaguaca

was clearly visible. Its neatly whitewashed houses, together with its conspicuous church and steeple, all in the midst of flourishing gardens and cultivated fields, formed a pleasing picture; and I was about to enter the place and indulge in a closer inspection of it, when my attention was attracted to a small lake surrounded by green sward, in which a number of fine ducks were swimming and sporting about.''

Jumping off my horse and making a slight *detour*, I let fly both the barrels of my gun one after the other, and bagged a couple of birds. Whilst I was engaged in this amusement my horse took it into his head to move on, so that I was obliged, in order not to lose sight of him, to give up my sport and follow in his track. The started birds, however, made a long circuit in their flight, and thus afforded me the opportunity of trying my luck another time. Having thus beguiled the way, I soon found myself pacing along the streets of the town, and having discovered the post-house, I secured the accommodation of an excellent apartment. There was plenty of forage for my cattle;

and, with a good supply of bread and mutton, I contrived to fare most sumptuously. The place seemed to abound with water-melons and a kind of peach; but the latter, not being ripe, was anything but palatable. Everything about me partook of the character of the little town, which was exceedingly clean and rural.

I had an introduction to the curate from the Bishop of La Paz, and having paid a visit to the reverend gentleman, found him ensconced in a very comfortable parsonage, and with his cassock off and his sleeves tucked up, busily employed in gardening, and the very picture of health and contentment. Around him were playing a number of little children, the very fac-similes of himself—his little nephews and nieces, *as he called them.* The good man apologized to me for the state of *deshabille* in which I had found him, and immediately conducted me to his dwelling, where he introduced me to his relative, the housekeeper, who made me heartily welcome. In the course of the evening I received a visit from the *padre* in full canonicals, to make amends for the little

ceremony with which we had made our first acquaintance. The postmaster, a rosy bustling Argentine, had, I found, come to an understanding with my young men relative to their animals, and it was agreed that several mules and the lame horse should be left under his care, in order to feed on *alfa*, which appears to thrive most abundantly in this province.

On the following day we took our departure from Humaguaca, crossing over large plains covered with prairie grass, formed into little clumps, and of such an extraordinary growth that a man on horseback might easily be concealed behind them. Sometimes we followed the course of a stream, the pools formed by which gave shelter to a few ducks, at which we occasionally had a random shot. Farms and cultivated grounds every now and then came in sight, and sometimes a town with its church and Plaza, conspicuous objects in the distance. Leaving these, a river of some consequence was forded close to a high embankment, under which it sped with great impetuosity. The road all at once turned into a plain, covered with fragments

of stone and chalk, which were so intensely glaring in the rays of the sun that it was impossible to look at them.

We had now arrived at the entrance of that high range of dark forbidding rocks before mentioned, and the wind in this channel blew all of a sudden such a perfect hurricane that we were nearly blinded by clouds of white dust which arose with the air from all quarters. Closing our eyes, which, as the Yankees would say, smarted "pretty considerably," we urged on our horses and went a-head. After proceeding for some considerable distance, sometimes following the course of the river, at other times diverging from it, we at length began to descry in the distance several houses and trees, and soon on the road-side appeared the post of Menura. This building gave the choice of but one small room, which I verily believe had never been swept out since the time when it was built, the dirt and filth having accumulated to such a degree that they might be taken away in shovelsfull. An officer who was staying here, and who told me that he had been expatriated from

Bolivia, as one of the party of General Bolivar, came fortunately to my rescue, and persuaded me to accept a part of his room, which was the only one deserving the name of a room in the whole building.

After treating the poor fellow to a hearty meal, to which I largely contributed by the execution I made amongst a flock of pigeons or doves, which were continually perching on some fig-trees almost at the door of our dwelling, I prepared to retire to rest. Before doing so, however, the officer joined me in a cup of tea, which he concocted himself, not sparing the cognac; and I was truly delighted to see how the poor devil enjoyed himself. I must have been a perfect godsend to him. He told me that he had barely escaped with his life, without a single farthing in his pocket, and in possession merely of an old musket without any powder. He had, however, maintained himself by turning lawyer, and as, within twenty leagues round, none of the civil functionaries were able to read or write, all letters, communications, or documents of any sort were brought to him, with something in kind as a retaining fee.

By this means he had managed to keep his head above water, and would continue to do so, till some favourable opportunity should offer itself for enabling him to return to his native country.

Being tired with my ride I early sought my bed, but before I closed my eyes I mentioned to my new friend my suspicions relative to certain black things that I saw crawling upon the roof. He informed me that these were my old enemies the *bichucos*, and that I had only to put out the light for a few minutes when I should be besieged by a regular army of them. This announcement so frightened me, after all that had happened on a previous occasion, that I determined on the instant to sleep in the open air, and actually did so, in spite of the remonstrances of my friend, who told me that I should thereby run a very serious risk of catching cold. He, on the contrary, remained in doors to have "a hunt," as he called it, and, when tired of this amusement, he fell asleep, to be half devoured by these ravenous insects. What remained of him the next morning presented a piteous sight; and, having left

behind me certain legacies in the shape of powder, shot, cigars, and many little creature comforts, all which were most gratefully accepted, I took leave of my late companion, and resumed my journey.

Quitting the bed of the river, we followed its course along the bank, close to rich pastures and cultivated fields. Every now and then, we passed a Gaucho's house, with its *corral*, and three or four fine Argentine horses. These houses are always made of wood, of one story in height, and have a rough verandah in front, which is used for a variety of objects. Underneath this, are placed, in various positions, the bedsteads of the family, serving the double purpose of seats by day and of beds by night, even in the open air—weather permitting. In front of the house, a small clearage is made, which serves as a sort of court-yard. This is generally divided from the road, or plain, by large posts, with a wooden barrier on the top, on which some red coverings or bed-clothes are laid. In other cases, they are formed of bamboos. Attached to these posts are several horses; and it is invariably a

feature of a Gaucho's house, that a saddled horse is fastened to the railings in front of it. The rooms are roughly furnished, the kitchen being a shed at the back of the building. On a sort of gibbet, usually at the side of the house, is to be seen a whole bullock or part of one suspended, and ready for the family use. The females are generally dressed in a very slovenly manner; often exposing the neck, shoulders, and arms, by the falling off of a shawl, with which they enwrap themselves, in order to cover the *negligé* attire of a solitary *chemise*. The petticoats which they wear are ample, and have a very neat appearance.

The men are mostly good-looking men, and many of them not dark, with brown hair, without a moustache, and having the whiskers trimmed after the English fashion. They are always well-dressed, wearing riding boots of drab leather, with heavy spurs, generally of silver. Their jackets, when dressed in their best attire, are of blue cloth, beautifully embroidered with black silk lace. This description answers that of a person in a superior rank of life. The

common *peon*, or labourer, dresses as he can.

As we advanced, we saw many fields with cows and oxen, and as many as twenty or thirty horses grazing in them. Our road, after this, for some time lay over a plain between two rows of hills, which, at first, were composed of mere sterile rocks, but afterwards appeared decked with a rich carpeting of verdure. As we descended deeper into the vale, the hills became of a greater altitude, and appeared covered with trees and flowers, forming Alpine scenery of great beauty. At the bottom of a steep slope ran the dangerous river of *Las Piedras*. This river, which is bad enough for travellers even in the dry season, was, now that the periodical rains had set in, almost rendered impassable by reason of the rapidity and force of its current. It takes its name from the circumstance of a stream of large stones being continually hurled along in its fury, destroying all footing to the poor animals that attempt to cross its waters.

Our mules resisting all persuasion, and the men themselves appearing disinclined to

make the advance, owing to the report of some persons having been drowned there a day or two before, I lost all patience, and putting spurs to my faithful steed, made him enter the water, where I observed that it flowed with unusual fury, assuring me of its shallowness. Two or three times I found the poor beast was carried away by the stream, but a desperate effort brought him out of the current, and we gained the opposite shore, some hundred feet, at least, below the point from whence we started. The cargo mules no sooner saw me safe on the other side of the river, than they took to the water, and, as it were by instinct, followed in the very steps by which my mule had accomplished her task, arriving at the opposite bank without any casualty. Battista, who had lingered some time behind, lost the exact place of the ford, and was carried away by the rapid current, mule and all; and would inevitably have met his death, had it not been for the timely succour of a *lasso*, well thrown by one of the young men, which happily caught the mule, and dragged him to the shore. It was some time before

Battista recovered from the effects of the fright and wetting which this unfortunate adventure occasioned.

The country now entered upon was perfectly tropical, with its prolific growth of vegetation and rich exuberance of trees, shrubs, and flowers. The pretty town of Leon, with its detached houses, formed a complete Arcadian garden. The only thing that seemed to me to detract from the healthy character of the place, was the oppressive aroma of the flowers, and the fœtid smell of the growing vegetation. Stopping at the post, which appeared occupied by a numerous family, I observed, near at hand, the sheltered porch and gallery of a rustic church, overhung with clusters of ripe grapes, situated in a retired garden, and surrounded by a little forest of peach trees, with small heaps of their ripe fruit piled underneath. Having had my baggage stowed away in a place of shelter, I prepared to enjoy this little Paradise.

A plentiful supply of eggs, milk, and fruits gave me all that heart could desire; and these, together with a few well-selected

articles from my private store, set Battista to work *con amore*. Whilst preparations were going on for our meal, I ventured to the river, hard by, resolved to act upon the advice that had been given me, to hold fast to a strong branch for fear of accidents. The strength of the current was prodigious, and was very near carrying me away. I however managed to get out, and, refreshed with my bath, returned all the more capable of enjoying my dinner. The master of the post and his people brought me large trays and baskets filled with delicious fruits, and laid them down in heaps before me.

After doing full justice to the ample fare provided, we arranged our beds for the night. I kept my light burning whilst I enjoyed a cigar, when the general buzz of insects all around became most overpowering. Whilst I was listening to the various sounds which caught my ear, I perceived several frogs, no doubt attracted by the light, dancing about my bed. Their size was prodigious, and their numbers such, that not at all relishing the intrusion, I drew my sword, and cut and slashed away till I was tired, as I sat upon my

bed, to the great amusement of my party. Finding all my efforts useless, owing to the continued reinforcement of these animals, to diminish their number, and knowing them to be perfectly harmless, I covered myself over in my bed, and went to sleep. Had I been a Frenchman, I might perhaps have dreamt of *fricasees*. As it was I enjoyed an excellent night's rest, and was ready on the morrow to make a fresh start.

After an excellent breakfast of chocolate, eggs, and fruit, I received from the pretty daughter of the postmaster, a beautiful and tastefully arranged *bouquet*, and a little basket of choice fruits, for which I presented the blushing *brunette* with a paper of French *bon-bons*. At length I quitted this agreeable place, and its good inmates, but shall ever have a lively and pleasing recollection of the few short hours which I spent in this delightful valley of Leon.

CHAPTER IV.

Cuculli — Loss of our Mules — Casa Grande—Salta—Preparations for crossing the Pampas—Capital sport in the Lagunas—Swollen state of the rivers—Bad roads —Bivouac in a storm—Carnival time at a farm-house —Insurrection in the Province—Tapia—Tucuman.

We started from Leon in sufficient time to be at Cuculli in the middle of the day. After traversing a flat and uninteresting country for many leagues, this city stood out in bold relief against the blue horizon, presenting, as seen from the distance, a fort-like appearance, owing to the uniformity of the buildings of one story high, which are of a massive character, and generally built of brick. The disposition of the streets, which cross each other at right angles, form blocks, but the

churches, and more particularly the cathedral, with their spires pointing upwards in different localities of the place, add a decidedly interesting feature in its general aspect. As we entered a long street, lined with splendid mansions, and stores, and shops, containing every species of goods, everything betokened a high degree of civilization. There were the loungers, parading up and down, and decked out according to the latest Parisian fashion. In the grand Plaza are some large buildings, which have some claim to architectural beauty, and amongst the rest the cathedral, which, by the imposing character of its proportions, adds greatly to the importance of the place.

On turning out from the Plaza, we arrived at the *Tambo*, a large hotel, which is built somewhat on the principle of a monastery. A large square yard is surrounded by a number of small rooms, the doors of which open upon it. These rooms are furnished with a bedstead, a table, and a couple of chairs, and each traveller, by paying in advance, retains possession of the key for as long a time as he pleases. The manager of

this establishment was a female, who likewise kept a sort of store, where many articles of food and sundry beverages might easily be procured. This lady was exceedingly obliging, and soon provided me with a dinner, which, perhaps, was more abundant than choice; but, nevertheless, proved very acceptable to me under the circumstances. As rumours of an alarming nature reached me relative to the advance of the hostile armies of Generals Urquiza and Rosas, which were likely to make the transit across the field of occupation, I thought it advisable to call upon the Governor to ascertain if there were security for travellers. Around the door of his house were a number of soldiers, in the cut-throat garb which distinguished the followers of General Rosas. This consisted of red woollen plush trousers, full, in the Turkish fashion, but only extending to the knees, and loose skirts of the same; a red cap, or *bonnet de police;* a belt round the waist, from which was suspended a cavalry sword; and at the back, conspicuously stuck in the girdle, the grand weapon of the country, the redoutable *cuchillo* or knife.

The Governor of Cuculli was a tall, powerful man, and, as I understood from report, rapacious and despotic in the extreme. He was very much detested, and having exerted all his energies to uphold the power of Rosas, he had so compromised himself with General Urquiza that, as I afterwards learnt, he had to seek his safety by flight, on the overthrow of the former. On the occasion of my visit, he received me with great courtesy, and gave me the advice to remain at Salta, until I could glean some positive information as regarded the contending armies. I was informed that the Tambo, the decorations of the church, and many public improvements had been set on foot and maintained at the expense of a certain patriotic *padre*, who did more for the public weal than the functionary who was entrusted with the peculiar charge of it.

Sending my luggage on in advance, I recommenced my journey, passing on my way through the Plaza, where stood rows of the huge waggons of the country, with their enormous wheels, and the oxen attached, by which they were drawn—some of them form-

ing complete butchers' shops; others filled with pumpkins, water-melons, and various kinds of fruit and vegetables. Leaving the town, and descending to the bed of the river, we hoped soon to overtake the *herreros* and guide. The morning was beautifully fresh, and the footsteps of the mules were distinctly visible along the track we were following. Fancying ourselves in the right road, we made great exertions to overtake the rest of our party. The banks on both sides of the way were covered with fresh grass and mosses; and the delightful shade of the numerous trees that lined them screened us most effectually from the intense heat of the noonday sun, and enabled us to travel along with comparative comfort. After following for some time the winding course of the river, in whose clear and cool waters I continually beheld myself mirrored—as perfect a brigand as was ever produced upon the stage, we all at once diverged from it, and took our course across the country, up hill and down dale, in the momentary expectation of seeing some signs of our lost mules and baggage—but all to no purpose.

The view, as we journeyed along, was most extensive, and included a variety of objects. We looked abroad on a fine champagne country, covered with verdure, the trees and thick cover being very abundant, and every now and then we came across a beautiful clearage of fine pasture land. Meeting a large party of men and women, gaily decked out in their holiday clothes, full of fun and mischief, and with much clamorous hilarity attempting to lift one another out of their saddles whilst their horses were in full career, I stopped them to inquire if they had seen anything of my missing party. They answered me in the negative; but told me, as I should soon have to ford rather a dangerous river, of two roads which would lead me to the best points for crossing it. In the road which we ultimately took there were some steep descents, and we soon found ourselves passing along groves which were skirted by dense wood, in which game of various kinds was flying about in all directions. The graceful and natural arrangement of the trees at times formed impervious forests, and occasionally we entered upon

avenues with adjoining slopes, in which were great cavities having the appearance of abandoned quarries, and filled sometimes with stagnant water. Traversing some lanes, at the sides of which a tract of cultivated land presented itself, we discovered two or three cottages; and I was just about to ride up to one of them, to make some inquiry, when we encountered a tall Gaucho mounted on a strong horse, and having acknowledged his salutation, I informed him of our anxiety respecting our young men and mules.

This fellow declared that he had seen them take the other road, and offered to accompany me to the ford of the river, close at hand, and otherwise assist me till I should fall in with my missing cargoes, which, he assured me, would take place at the junction of the two roads, two or three leagues farther on. Gaining our confidence, Battista and myself consented to take him for a guide; and as the heat of the sun was then very oppressive, I proposed a halt for a short time by the side of a clear spring in the shade. Overhauling our *alforjas*, we soon found bread, roast meat, *foie gras*, and biscuits, together with a small

bottle of French brandy, of which we all partook with considerable appetite, especially the Gaucho, who enjoyed the treat amazingly, and was much interested in an examination of the fire-arms which I carried.

Mounting our horses after the feast, we set out for the ford, which we at length passed; not without some difficulty, from the fact of there being several large holes in the ground beneath the deep and silent waters, which it was as necessary for us to avoid as the boisterous rapids of the river. After riding for some time through groves and byeways, we found ourselves again at the river's side. It had now become very shallow and extended, forming basins, pools, and little eddies, surrounded by moss-covered banks. Our Gaucho friend proposed that we should repose here for a short time, whilst he explored the other road that ran close by. He at the same time asked my permission to procure a sheep for us, as the next post, he said, would afford us no provisions in any shape; and my people, who had taken the longest road, and therefore would be fatigued with their journey, would derive great benefit from this precau-

tion. I foolishly complied with his request, giving him three royals to market with. The heat being very oppressive, myself and my culinary friend settled down for a comfortable sleep, suffering our animals to graze quietly on the herbage that was close at hand. We awoke very warm and uncomfortable; and as our guide had not returned, we proposed a bathe in the river, and enjoyed the luxury.

Still no Gaucho made his appearance; and, therefore, mounting our horses, we began to reconnoitre, hallooing as we advanced, but all to no purpose. We soon discovered that we had been fairly sold, and determined to make the best of our disappointment. The fellow had, in fact, done himself more injury than us; for, had he taken us to the post, or assisted in regaining our lost mules, I fully intended to give him a dollar for his pains. There was now no remedy but to follow the course of the road, which appeared to have been well trodden, and we jogged along it, in hopes that we might succeed by the exercise of our own ingenuity. We several times crossed the bed of the river; and barren heaths, wilds, and thick woods followed each

other in quick succession, but still no post appeared. At length a woman driving a few asses passed along from the opposite direction, and informed me that the post was not near, but that a little further on I should fall in with the Casa grande (literally, the "large house,") corresponding to what we should call the squire's mansion in England.

After continuing in our route for a league or two with these cheering words still ringing in our ears, the sky all at once became overcast, and all the indications of a coming thunder-storm began to show themselves. As it was now very desirable to make as little delay as possible, we urged on our animals to their greatest speed. Entering a large plain, skirted on one side by hills covered with wood, we could plainly see on the opposite side of it, and divided from it by a river, the Casa grande, with its surrounding grounds. This sight gave us great encouragement, and away we galloped, forded the river in a trice, and hastened to the house. No less than between thirty and forty horses, some of them richly caparisoned, appeared, picketed to the railings; and under

a spacious verandah a large party of ladies and gentlemen had just assembled to celebrate, with feasting and dancing, the birthday of the daughter of the master of the house. Certain forerunners of a storm were beginning to manifest themselves in some heavy drops of rain which were just falling as I rode up, and soon there was a general stir amongst the company for the purpose of getting the horses and saddles under cover. I addressed myself to some of the gentlemen, telling them of my mishap in being separated from the rest of my party, and excused myself on the plea of the approaching storm and the lateness of the hour, for venturing to intrude amongst them. The master of the house and a fine-looking European friend of his now came forward, told me that I was quite welcome, and afterwards introduced me to some of the ladies. The manner of all was most courteous, and I feel a lasting debt of gratitude to these good people for taking compassion on the poor stranger, and showing him every possible mark of attention.

The storm at length burst in all its fury,

the clouds discharging a sheet of water with such rapidity and force, that the river which I had lately passed with so much facility now became a little lake, on the brink of which I could discern my lost mules fruitlessly attempting to ford its waters. After a time they were compelled to withdraw, and I lost sight of them. The interior of the house was prettily decorated for the occasion which had drawn the company together. Beautiful flowers were intertwined with leaves and branches, forming every variety of device and garland, and festoons were suspended all around the several apartments. Refreshments of all kinds peculiar to the country were abundantly served, and consisted of preserves, cakes, sweetmeats, and a large assortment of exciting beverages. Music afforded its resource, and guitars were in great requisition. To the accompaniment of these pretty duets were sung, and *charangas* and choruses were ably performed by several of the party.

The convivialities of the day soon commenced in good earnest, and happiness and good-humour began to manifest themselves in

every countenance. Dinner was announced, and the whole company proceeded to take their places for the forthcoming feast. Long tables had been ranged along the centre of the room, and groaned beneath a profusion of dishes, which included every delicacy that could be thought of. The fare consisted of soups containing meat cut into small pieces, potatoes, *chochos* (fresh Indian corn), and other vegetables, stews coloured red with *ajïs* (red peppers), roast ribs of beef flavoured with onions, red pepper, and *tomatas* or love apples, a whole roast lamb, preserves, pancakes, cheese, honey, and a variety of sweets. The principal drinks were *chichia* and *alvea*. There were others, of which I did not partake.

The young gentlemen amused themselves at table, by presenting to their favourite ladies a choice piece of meat, or other delicacy, on the point of a fork, and the compliment was acknowledged by a similar return. Several speeches were made in proposing and responding to a variety of toasts, which were drunk with much enthusiasm; and then commenced a singular pastime, according to the

custom of the country, which, I should say, would be "more honoured in the breach than the observance." It consists of the ladies and gentlemen shooting into each other's eyes little pellets of bread, which, though productive of great entertainment, may yet lead to serious consequences. After the company had exhausted themselves with these sports, everything was cleared away, and the young ladies of the house delighted all present by singing some of the pretty airs of the country. As every one, in due course, was called upon to contribute towards the amusements of the evening, I, like the rest, came in for my share, and having taken up a guitar, accompanied myself in singing Rossini's beautiful air of "Largo al factotum," which gave such general satisfaction, that I was requested to repeat it several times in the course of the evening.

I now received more marked attention than before, the Argentines being so passionately fond of music; and although the Spanish ladies are generally very reserved to strangers, they became, on this occasion, very talkative and complimentary. Dancing

at length commenced in good earnest; and as I was reluctantly compelled to stand up amongst them, several partners were selected for me, who kindly put up with my *gaucheries*. Quadrilles, waltzes, and polkas had their run, and a noted country-dance, called *Cieleto Cielo*, wound up the entertainment at about three or four in the morning. Conspicuous amongst the dark beauties who figured in the happy scene, were three handsome sisters, with light auburn hair, the daughters of our kind host's European friend, who had been so ready to grant me the hospitalities of the house. When beds were thought of, the best rooms in the house were devoted to the ladies, and the gentlemen had to seek accommodation for themselves in every nook and corner. Six or seven took up their quarters in the same room, and saddles, saddle-cloths, ponchos, and everything suited to the purpose were made available on the occasion. A numerous party found shelter under the verandahs, the beds being formed in rows, in which, after the fatigues of the dance, they slept away soundly till morning.

The grey dawn at last broke upon the scene,

and the party, having accomplished a hasty toilet, sat down to a meal of chocolate, coffee, and grilled meats. Then dances, songs, and all sorts of games were proposed, and bade fair to detain us all for the remainder of the day. However, as my mules and their cargoes at last made their appearance, I was under the necessity of preparing for my departure. The announcement of my intention made several of the ladies and gentlemen propose to be my escort, in order to be present at another party that was to take place that day, at the house of the father of the three young ladies. Having bade adieu to our kind host and his family, the cavalcade started, and rendered the first part of my journey exceedingly agreeable. Our course lay along a good road, skirted on one side by hills covered with large trees and underwood, and on the other by a wide tract of open country, through which a broad river quietly meandered. We descried in the distance a number of large *haciendas* in close proximity, and resembling a small town surrounded by rich gardens, woods, and fields, all redundant with vegetation of a

tropical growth. Some of these buildings were in the Moresco style of architecture, and on an extensive scale, having large galleries and colonnades very conspicuous on the exterior. My amiable friends had now to leave me, but urged me to accompany them to partake of the festivities of another day. This I politely declined, on the ground of the necessity of my arrival at Salta as soon as possible; and with many regrets on both sides, the parting at last took place, leaving me a pleasing reminiscence of the happy hours I had spent in the Casa grande.

By the time I had finally bade adieu to my kind friends, my mules were completely out of sight, and I endeavoured to make the best of my way along the road in order to overtake them. On this occasion of my being left in the lurch I was perfectly alone, as Battista had advanced with the rest of my party. After a time I came up to a cross, whence the road diverged in two directions, and I was quite at a loss as to which of them I should take; nor had I an opportunity of making any inquiries, as the few houses which were in sight were at a considerable

distance from me; and thus being left to judge for myself, I unfortunately came to a wrong decision and struck out into the wrong road.

For some little way it appeared to be well trodden, and I felt assured that it would lead me to Salta; but I soon found myself involved in a maze of windings, covered with thick underwood, which increased in size every instant, until at length it amounted to a perfect forest. The road itself dwindled into a little footpath, which was so much intersected by others crossing it in every direction, that I was puzzled every moment, as to whether or not I was pursuing the right one. Riding had become extremely painful and dangerous, for there was such an accumulation of branches overshadowing the path, that I was obliged continually to bend my head to avoid being thrown off my mule. My course became more and more uncertain; and after a time the path was entirely lost.

In all directions there was nothing but jungle, deep gullies, and dried watercourses; and occasionally an abrupt slope and hollow in the forest, walled in on all sides by broken

cliffs, and hills covered with wood. Riding carelessly along for some time, and hoping every instant to find myself again in the open country (many of these byepaths being used by the natives for the purpose of making short cuts in their journeys, or to enable them to avoid bogs and other impassable tracts), I discovered that I had lost my road, and I began to think seriously of the predicament in which I was placed. I now wandered about for two hours, and only rendered myself more and more perplexed in the multiplicity of paths that attracted my attention, and fearing to make a choice, lest, after all, it might not turn out to be the right one.

I did not exactly like this state of things, and began at last to shout out most lustily; but there was not even an echo to encourage my hopes. My poor beast, which was very much jaded, and had been knocked about most unmercifully by the branches of the trees during the course of this unpleasant ramble, seemed as anxious as myself to be relieved from our dilemma. A Gaucho, who was riding upon the top of the hill, on hearing my halloo, left his horse and came down to

me. I hailed his approach with great joy, and promised him a couple of royals if he would extricate me from my difficulty. This he accomplished in fine style; leading me, however, by as breakneck a sort of road as was ever travelled by mortal, before or since. I no sooner found myself safe on the other side of the range, than I gratefully presented my guide with his well-earned wages; and determined, if possible, to steer my way better in future.

I was now in the right road, traversing a delightful tract of country, the river winding its serpentine course along the fertile plains. The road led directly to this river, which was approached across what appeared to be a beautiful meadow, and accordingly I started off in order to cross it; but found to my annoyance, that the greater part of it was a morass; and I had scarcely placed my foot within its bounds, before myself and mule went down into a deep hole, and came out again in a most pitiable plight. Halting on the brink of the river, I called to a man whom I saw driving asses, and asked him to come and wash us a little, as we were sadly

bespattered with mud. On his approach, I shrunk back with perfect horror, for he was a real living skeleton; the victim of some dreadful malady which had consumed his frame. I gave him a piece of money, and was glad to dispense with his services. Crossing the river, I fell into the highroad, when small farms and cottages indicated that Salta was not far distant. Another river was crossed, and my course lay along its banks, which were a series of slopes covered with trees and shrubs; and on a large plain, opening towards the right, appeared the straggling and ruinous city of Salta.

The approaches to it consisted of buildings, partly inhabited and partly in a state of decay, walls newly made, and others threatening every instant to fall. The streets presented the appearance of *Pantanos*, (mud ditches,) and passable only for pedestrians, on stones and planks of wood, placed by the inhabitants before their doors, for the general convenience. The effluvium arising from these was most offensive, so that I passed quickly through the city, and was much struck with the forlorn and deplorable state of everything

I saw. On the grand Plaza stands the Cabeldo, (police-guard,) and around the doors were lounging about or lying down forty or fifty of the Gaucho soldiers in their red attire. After this, I passed on to the Tambo, a new building, as yet in an unfinished state, but promising excellent accommodation for the traveller. It was an enterprise undertaken by a Senor Oreburo—a man of great energy and of great consideration amongst his fellow countrymen.

Without exception, Salta is the dirtiest city in the whole of the Republic. It contains many large and good houses, but the streets are no better than mere sewers, filled in the wet season with mud and water, and in which a little river rushes impetuously along after a thunder storm. Whilst on my way through the place, I had a visit from a little Irish apothecary, of whom I chanced to purchase some few trifling medicines, and who was so delighted at meeting with a person who could speak to him in English, that he asked my permission for him to call upon me, before I left the town. During the visit, a terrible storm took place, so that poor

Paddy was obliged to take off his boots and stockings, tuck up his trousers above his knees, and wade home like a duck. In dry weather, the dust here is intolerable, and the streets are almost as disagreeable as in the rainy season.

The shops and stores have little in their outward show to recommend them, but internally they are very neat, and well stocked with goods of every variety, principally of French manufacture. I bought a hat at the shop of a superior French hatter, who informed me that very little business was stirring, through the tyrannical and barbarous conduct of the governor. This man is a monster in human form, and no one is secure from the effect of his villanies. Proscriptions are put in force to such an extent, that scarcely a family of consequence and means is to be met with throughout the province. Contributions are levied on all Europeans as well as natives, as often as the whim takes him; and if these are not complied with on the instant, a prison, seizure of goods, or even a worse calamity, is sure to ensue.

At this time, great exertions were being

made to levy and organize a militia, for immediate active service; a certain young officer, a native of Tucuman, and of good family, having appeared in the province with from a hundred to a hundred and fifty partizans, in order to revolutionize the people, overthrow the government of General Rosas, and proclaim that of General Urquiza in its stead. They did not, however, come to any decisive action; and finding a great stir, in opposition to their cause, fell back on Tucuman, where, no doubt, they felt greater assurance of success. The Governor, whose politics were those of the Government, and who felt great interest in upholding Rosas' power, caused a reinforcement to be made, which was soon got ready, to the amount of about three thousand men.

The shops at Salta are generally well lighted at night, and produce a very pleasing effect. It is the custom here in the evening for the gentlemen to take the ladies out for a ride. They are, for the most part, mounted on good horses, gaily caparisoned, with a cloth or carpet, sometimes of a very costly material, placed behind the saddle. On this the lady

is seated, and supports her balance by slightly holding the gentleman, who is in front of her. In the suburbs of the town are cottages, and delightful gardens, crowded with luxuriant vegetation and fruits; and on the banks of a large river which runs through farms and plantations, the equestrians take their evening ride. This river affords a bathing-place to the people of the town; and persons of all ranks may be seen here at all times of the day, participating in this refreshing enjoyment. The market-place, which is situated in a street next the Plaza, presents, early in the morning, a scene of much excitement and bustle. It is crowded with blacks, (formerly the slaves of the Spaniards, but now free,) who are the principal fruit-vendors and gardeners in this locality. There is a large abundance of fruits, vegetables, eggs, fowls, beef, and milk. On one or two occasions, I was enabled to procure some fresh-water fish from boys who had been angling in the river.

By the persuasion of some gentlemen, (who, it appears by the sequel, were in-

terested parties,) I was induced to purchase a carriage, to make the journey across the Pampas to Buenos Ayres. The commission I entrusted to a gentleman of a very respectable exterior, who inspired me with the most perfect confidence, and the result was, that a purchase was made, and the large sum of 300 dollars paid down. To prevent my troubling myself much about the matter, I was made to believe that the gentleman who was engaged on my part in the transaction was perfectly qualified for his task, from his knowledge of the country in which I was about to travel. I transmitted to this individual letters of recommendation, and felt myself quite secure in his hands; but, as I afterwards discovered, he was playing a dishonest game for the benefit of himself and others, and I was, unfortunately, his too easy victim.

A morning or two previous to my departure I was introduced to my future servants, as complete a set of ruffians as ever I set eyes on. The captain (Martinez) was a man between forty and fifty years of age, of moderate height, though strongly built. The

character of his countenance, his rough beard and matted hair, indicated extreme dissipation, and his general appearance betokened cunning and treachery. The second, Pizarro, was a tall, smiling old Gaucho, more than six feet in height, and very robust and active, though his age, I was told, must have been nearly seventy years. This fellow, as well as his companion, was dressed in red. The next, a *peon*, was a perfect animal, one who could sit down and eat half a sheep at a meal, or even more if he could get it. His name was *Obecaro* (Sheep-eater), and he was the ugliest wretch I ever beheld, and as thick and clumsy as the beasts he fed on. Another *peon* was a good-looking young Gaucho, very gentle and obliging, though, at the same time, very lazy. The last, also a *peon*, belonged to the cattle-contractor, and was as fine and active a man as it was possible to see. He drove forty horses before him.

The carriage which I had purchased at length came to my hotel, covered up with a sort of cover or cloth, which I was told was intended to screen it from the powerful rays of the sun, but which I afterwards discovered was designed to conceal a large

multitude of defects. My new servants set to work to cut bands out of two or three bullock-hides, so as to form lassos to bind and strengthen the wheels and other parts of the vehicle. This completed, a hatchet, lantern, bill-hook, nails, and other sundries, were carefully stowed away within. I furnished myself also with a supply of *mati* (herbs drunk as tea, or rather sucked through a tube) for the Gaucho men, together with *aguardiente* (brandy of the country distilled from cane). Then there was added plenty of provisions, such as preserves, bread baked for my especial use, and answering admirably, candles, tea, chocolate, coffee, wines, brandy, and two bottles of currant-syrup,—a delightful and refreshing beverage; peaches, grapes, and figs; the latter the finest that I ever beheld. I had to give to each of my men several dollars as payment in advance, with positive orders to sleep under the coach the night before my departure, not only for the protection of my valuable purchase, but to prevent themselves from getting tipsy, drunkenness amongst this people being a very prevalent vice.

My *herreros* had taken their leave of me

some few days before I finally quitted Salta. These young men had conducted themselves with the greatest propriety during the whole of the journey I had made in their company. They were remarkable for their extreme honesty and attention to myself, and had become so much attached to my faithful horse Moro, which excited very general admiration from every one, that, finding it no longer possible to retain the noble animal, I made them a present of him, with the understanding that he was to be kept for their own private use, and kindly treated. This they swore to do, with tears in their eyes, caressing the beautiful creature which had so well performed his difficult task without once relaxing from his inimitable *paso* (pace), or showing the least symptom of distress.

Before leaving Salta, I was introduced to a Hamburg doctor, an obliging sort of fellow, and withal very clever, but unfortunately with rather too decided a bias for the bottle. He had resided in the country for thirty years; and knew, therefore, how to give me very profitable advice. This person offered me for four hundred dollars an excellent

carriage or omnibus, which was nearly new, having performed only one journey, and quite worth the money. The chance of so advantageous a purchase came too late, as I had already parted with my money for a very treacherous vehicle, at least twenty years old, and only patched up for sale. I mention these circumstances in order to caution others, who may have to pass along the same road, never to place any dependence on letters of recommendation. The actuating principle of all, (even of gentlemen, who, from their position, should be above such mean actions,) appears to be, to cheat and plunder you if they can. The best plan is, in all cases, to go and judge for yourself, live at your hotel and, as an introduction may only put you into their clutches, to avoid, if possible, accepting the hospitality of others.

Having a desire to have my hair cut, I inquired for a barber, and was informed that there was but one in the whole city. Waiting upon the learned professor, I found him from home and left word for his attendance upon myself. He never came, so I called again on him, with the same success as

before. At last I was fortunate enough to find him at home, and, after waiting for some time, till it came to my turn to receive the benefit of his scientific skill, I found that I had to pay six royals for the honour of being operated upon by so experienced a hand. He ought, verily, to do a thriving business if all his customers pay him at the rate of *three shillings* for so trifling a service.

On the morning of my departure the forty relay horses were driven on in advance, and Battista and myself followed, mounted in our carriage, (which, after all, was a comfortable and roomy affair, sufficiently accounted for from the fact of its having been built, as I was afterwards told, many years before for a bishop or a priest,) with my rifle and guns placed in loops along the roof, and my swords and pistols disposed at the sides, and ready for use in case of need. The horses were put to, to be mounted by postilions rigged out in scarlet, as a party of gentlemen on horseback stood in readiness to escort me a little way upon the road.

The signal having been given, off we went, dashing along the ill-conditioned streets,

through pools of water and quagmires, and in danger of being jolted out of one's very skin. The country immediately on the outside of the city presents to view numerous plantations, and farms, and tracts of land, capable of the highest state of cultivation. The natural richness of the soil is so great, and the vast quantities of decayed vegetable matter is calculated to form so rich a manure, that abundant crops might easily be procured at little expense as well as trouble. The grape here is so prolific, that the most delicious wines might be made and exported; but the despotic character of the Government discourages industry in the people; and, owing to the want of security which is experienced, all foreign enterprise is utterly checked. The sugar-cane might be cultivated with advantage, and the manufacture of cotton, where the plant thrives so well, would be a lucrative undertaking. Peaches, figs, and other fruits, are luscious to a degree, and will bear competition with those reared in any other climate in the world. Salta is noted for its workmanship in saddles, bridles, and horse-furniture in general. Boots made of the

tanned leather used by horsemen, form a portion of the export commerce of the province. Large troops of horses and mules, collected from the interior, are sent twice a year to the markets of Bolivia, and even Peru, and are generally sold with great profit.

Having got rid of my friends, we rattled on for some leagues in our crazy vehicle, when the pole of it broke, which put me quite out of temper with the people, who had palmed off upon me such a patched-up concern. I determined, however, to do the best with it, in place of having to send it back to Salta; and having dismounted close to a farm, purchased the shaft of a plough, and by my own exertions encouraged my men to cut it into form, and then strongly lash it to the carriage. Whilst they were engaged in finally adjusting it, I incautiously took off my glove, when, the moment that I did so, a black fly, an inch or more in length, flew down upon me from some felled timber, and stung me to such a degree, that I danced about with pain. This lasted for some hours, the pain reaching to my very shoulder. It

then subsided, and left no ill result behind. All being now in travelling trim, we mounted the vehicle once more, and moved on with some caution, not to put our temporary carpentry to too severe a test. Passing open country and thick woods alternately, for some time, we arrived at a large *hacienda.*

These buildings here began to assume a more fort-like appearance, having few windows near the ground, and being provided with a tower, or flat-roofed defence, in case of necessity. Continuing on our journey, we came to a sort of common, with a number of houses scattered about, having the appearance of a straggling town. At the entrance was a large house, the *hacienda* of a colonel in command of the district. This gentleman offered us refreshment, and on learning of the accident which had befallen us on the road, sent a *peon* on horseback a considerable distance to procure the assistance of a smith to perfect our work, and to remedy a defect in the axle of the wheel, which we had only just discovered. As these things could not be accomplished in an instant, I made up my mind to remain some little time, and set my

people to work to make a new pole for the carriage, by the time the blacksmith arrived.

The Colonel introduced me to a lady relation of his who was staying with him, as well as a jolly friar, who was travelling through the country, and had taken up his quarters at the same house. The son of our host, a lad about seventeen or eighteen, and half silly, completed the *coterie*. The domestic economy was anything but agreeable. It was the custom for the inmates never to partake of anything during the day until dinner-time, which was between twelve and one; and considering the early risings to which I had become habituated, and which were necessary from the intense heat of the climate, I bade fair to fall into a decline from the want of proper sustenance. To do justice to the daily fare, I ought, perhaps, to have mentioned that some *bombilas* of *maté* were partaken of before the arrival of the mid-day's meal.

The heat became very oppressive; and as I was in the habit of bathing two or three times a day, I adjourned, according to cus-

tom, to a small river which ran along the outskirts of the town, shaded by a grove of trees, and affording holes and little spaces sufficient for some half dozen to bathe at once. I had not long arrived at such a place as this, that chanced to be vacant, and had just commenced to enjoy the coolness of the water, when two females made their appearance. I coughed, and made other noises, thinking that there was some mistake, and that on seeing me, they would instantly decamp; but no—they sat down, quietly undressed themselves, and jumped into the water. This laxity of manners and want of the common decencies of life, to which I had been accustomed, quite put me to the blush. I immediately got out, walked to a neighbouring thicket, and having dressed myself as quickly as possible, went away. The Colonel, on my telling him of this adventure, laughed at my extreme delicacy, and having finished the operation in which he was engaged, joined me in the house. In process of time I overcame my scruples, and was in the habit of frequenting the river many times in the course of the day. I generally found

every little retreat crowded with males and females, who appeared not to take the least notice of each other.

The *padre* was a regular sportsman and was provided with a gun, but he was put out of conceit of it, and fell desperately in love with my ammunition and arms, on comparing them with his own. I appeared to understand his hints only so far as I thought prudent, but made him a present of some powder, caps, and some patent cartridges. One or two flying shots which I made at some doves that flew over the house astonished everybody, and stamped me in their eyes as a first-rate hand. The natives seldom attempt a flying shot, but secure their game in trees or on the ground.

During my stay I witnessed a scene which, even in this lawless and uncivilized country, proved the superiority of moral over physical force. A strong, muscular-looking Gaucho came to the porch of the Colonel's house, hat in hand, in the greatest affliction, and crying like a child. He stated that a certain man had beguiled away his wife, and held her in some place of conceal-

ment, which he had sought for in vain, and was broken-hearted at his want of success. The Colonel promised him redress, and sent him away. The guilty party was summoned and appeared, knife in girdle, a very giant in stature, and with a savage and sullen countenance. The Colonel received him alone, and in that secluded spot, without soldiers to protect his authority, addressed the culprit as follows: "What have you done with ——'s wife?" The man, looking on the ground, said that he knew nothing of her. "That is false: I order you to go to ——" (mentioning by name one of his men) and tell him to put you in the stocks, till I authorise your release." The man bowed and went away, and did as he was told. Some hours after I was passing another part of the common, and saw him lying down with both his feet in the stocks, expiating his crime with the utmost indifference. Having completely established the security of my coach, I at length took my leave of the Colonel and his family, and we made the best of our way along the road, to make up for lost time.

Shortly afterwards we entered what appeared to be an interminable forest, and made a gradual descent, passing under the shadow of several wide-spreading trees. We were excessively alarmed by a very large spider that found its way into the vehicle. It was as large as a small crab, covered with a furry coat, and poisonous to a degree. However, we got rid of him, and so escaped the danger of his bite. At sunset we had arrived at the *Lagunas*, or small lakes. The heavy rains had caused them to overflow their bounds, the road and both sides of the adjacent forest being one continued sheet of water. As the night was fast setting in, and the relays of horses had been considerably delayed in their course by several of them having strayed away from the rest, I determined to pitch my tent here for the night, and on the following day harness together twenty horses, if necessary, to drag us through the waters.

Arrangements for our encampment were soon made. Large branches of decayed wood were brought from the forest, and a bonfire was formed sufficient to roast an ox. A whole

sheep and part of a bullock, provisions we had procured at the last town where we rested, were placed upon it, and were soon roasting away and shedding abroad their savory odours. Shouldering my gun, I went with Pedro, one of my young Gauchos, to explore the lake, and in a short space of time such a sight opened upon us as is rarely equalled, exhibiting to a sportsman all he could possibly desire. Leaving the beaten road, and advancing to the margin of the lake, a large expanded sheet of water presented itself, walled in on one side by an extensive field of rushes, and surrounded in other parts by wood, which approached the water's edge, and, occasionally, where a number of inlets were fringed by the surrounding timber, appeared as so many groves. Various parts of the water were literally swarming with ducks, some of which of a larger size than the rest, and of a black colour, were very conspicuous. Amongst them a large number of geese might be seen, but they were mostly out of the range of my gun.

The clatter and noise made by this feathered crew was almost intolerable. The

sound of my approach, or the rustling of the boughs as we forced our way through the tangled wood, caused all the birds to retire to the opposite side of the lake, where they were quite unapproachable; and, not having the means of surmounting the watery barrier, I was compelled to satisfy myself by taking an aim at a solitary brace or two, which I by chance surprised in some secluded creek. I beheld flight after flight of these birds arise into the air after the report of my gun, appearing like so many black clouds, and after a moment or two, when they had described their circuit, they would settle down again as before. Not being successful with my fowling piece, I took to my rifle, and soon brought down a splendid black duck, and a brace of the others. This was before sunset, and in time for dinner, so that Pedro was immediately on the alert, and having divested himself of his clothes, went into the water, and, like a retriever, brought the birds ashore.

The evening and the subsequent night turned out very fine, and we enjoyed ourselves amazingly around our blazing fire, as we lay squatted on the ground, and reclining

at our ease, watching the progress of the dinner. I have often, in the course of my travels, seen a sheep killed and dressed on the instant, an iron ramrod being run through the carcase, when it would be done to a turn over an enormous fire of burnt embers, and eat better, and more tender than with all the art which a Soyer or a Gunter could devise. Appetite is decidedly the best sauce, and on this occasion we all fell to in good earnest, and pronounced our primitive meal most delicious. We afterwards managed to pass a tolerably comfortable night, in spite of the chilling air and a raw mist, occasioned, no doubt, by the presence of so large a body of water in our vicinity. Pedro, in the morning, discovered that he had some symptoms of ague.

At break of day we assembled our relays, of which, three horses it appeared had been lost in the night. Ten were attached to the carriage, and drew us with some difficulty through a great mass of water, which extended for several miles. The manner in which the Gauchos urge on their beasts is very singular. By dint of hallooing and

screaming, and an unstinted use of the lasso, whip, reins, and spur, they encouraged the animals, who seemed to understand their business, and exerted themselves to the utmost. Our relay horses were driven before us, so that if any of the others gave the least symptom of distress or fatigue, their places were immediately supplied. I must mention the extraordinary address shown by the *peon* in charge of the horses. He drove them pell-mell before him, and scarcely had he brought up the stragglers before others diverged from the course and began to feed in different directions, running singly into the wood, or rushing through in numbers. This young man galloped in after them, passing in and out among the trees, or bobbing under their branches, and adroitly finding his way through apertures which seemed hardly large enough to admit his body, with the danger of being torn to pieces by thorns, or of having his brains dashed out by coming into contact with some projecting branch.*

* To protect their limbs in passing through a thicket, the Gauchos attach to their saddles two large pieces of

The waters had now risen to such a height that it was necessary to abandon the track of the main road. The men acted as pioneers, selecting a passage through the forest, which they made practicable, by hewing down branches of trees, and removing such other impediments as might hinder the progress of the carriage. This was a tedious undertaking, and required several hours to accomplish. During the whole day, our view was bounded by the forest, and we had nothing to enliven the scene, except an occasional small deer that crossed our path. A little before sunset, the time we generally looked forward to, as the termination of our day's journey, we emerged on a *plateau* of grass land, situated on a mount which commanded a view of the forest around, as far as the most distant horizon. The clearage was very extensive, and embraced the whole of the flat elevated ground. A Gaucho house or farm stood on one part of it, but appeared to be abandoned; the doors being all open, and tables, bed-

bullock hide, the hairy part being turned inwards. These stand out on both sides, and lap over the thighs on passing along where the road is very confined.

steads, chairs, and utensils of all kinds, being scattered about in the utmost disorder.

We soon lighted a cheerful fire, in the formation of which my men paid little respect to the personal property above-mentioned. A *peon* was mounted and despatched for water to a *cabrada*, which appeared in the distance, and near to which flowed a fork of the river. The musquitos here were intolerable and tormented us sadly, nor did even the vicinity of a rousing fire, prevent their stinging myself and my men to a most disfiguring extent. The side of a fine bullock, which we had kept in reserve, was dressed to our liking, and a hearty meal of it put us in excellent spirits. Making some inquiries, relative to the abandonment of this homestead, I ascertained that this locality, appearing to offer great advantages to the graziers, for their herds of cattle, they settled here, till a number of the tigers of the country, attracted by the cattle, made the place quite untenantable. The slaughter made by these animals became truly fearful, and the inmates of the house being occasionally besieged in their very dwelling, and finding great incon-

venience from the scarcity of water, at length determined on entirely evacuating the place.

Under the circumstances, we were glad enough on the following morning, to descend from our woody amphitheatre, and find ourselves out of the reach of the ravages of these tigers, without the loss of any of our cattle. Advancing gradually towards the neighbourhood of the great river Pasagis, the roar of it, as we approached, made me more apprehensive of the impracticability of a safe passage. I was not, however, to be daunted, but made my men descend to the beach and unload the vehicle. During this operation, I partook of an excellent breakfast, at the house of a man of superior class, and from him I gained much information, relative to my future journey. His house, which was well built and commodious, was opposite to several small dwellings, and a chapel, which was occasionally visited by a neighbouring priest. I soon had the ferryman at my command, and his solitary boat was immediately put into requisition, to convey myself and everything belonging to me, to the opposite side of the river.

The breadth of it appeared considerable, and, after heavy rains, must form an insurmountable barrier to all traffic and communication. The carriage, unburdened of its dead weight, was despatched to an advanced position, some distance up the river, and there made to pass over in a transverse direction, so as to afford as little resistance as possible to the running stream. This mode of transit answered perfectly well, and it was got over without the slightest accident. Whilst all this was progressing, I ventured to take a bathe, but was fairly driven out of the water, by swarms of wasps which infested the banks, and settled upon any part of the person that might be exposed, inflicting a sharp wound, as if made by a lancet. They frequently made me jump from the pain which their stings occasioned, but the sensations which I felt, quickly passed over, and I experienced no further annoyance from their bites.

Having gained the other side of the river in safety, the task of re-loading was soon accomplished. The character of the country was rather different to that of the tracts

through which we had lately passed. I saw several houses at a distance from each other, and some signs of a little cultivation. At one of the houses I purchased a side of a bullock of a negro, who seemed to be the proprietor, and partook of a cup of delightful water, which came from a spring close at hand. We were *en route* again as soon as possible, as the day had considerably advanced; and the roads, still hemmed in by the frost, were wretchedly bad, owing to the repeated transit of the caravans, which cut them up and form ruts, rendering them impassable to any other vehicle.

These caravans of carts, sometimes from sixty to a hundred or more in number, start from Buenos Ayres at certain seasons of the year, loaded with all sorts of merchandise, to be conveyed to the provinces and capitals of Cordova, Tucuman, and Salta. Though supported on two wheels, these waggons are of a ponderous construction, having beams and timbers fit for a seventy-four gun ship, and wheels from six to seven feet in diameter. These heavy vehicles often break down through the badness of the roads, and the

shattered wrecks of them are sometimes to be seen, left to rot and decay by the wayside. My men were now continually employed in repairing the roads, ere the carriage could pass along. At times deep pits appeared, as well as landslips and ruts; and all these had to be filled up with branches, stones, or earth, and reduced to a level, before we could proceed.

The sun had already sunk. Dark clouds were gathering around as we hastened on, intending to gain the nearest place where water was to be found, but we had to travel some distance before we made a halt for the night. The imperfect light of the closing day, combined with the carelessness of my people, who were hurrying heedlessly along, caused the coach to be thrown over a small embankment. As chance would have it, there was no serious damage, although I found myself in an instant most uncomfortably standing upon my head, which was thrust into my crushed beaver; and Battista lay buried in the materials of his profession, and almost smothered in eatables. Just at this crisis the horses had become disengaged

from the vehicle, and were quietly walking off, when Battista and myself had to extricate ourselves from our position as well as we could. Leaving my hat firmly fixed into the earth, I regained as good a perpendicular as was possible under the circumstances, and precipitately made my exit from the coach—not where I entered it some hours before, but out of the window.

The weather, which all along had been most threatening, now made up its mind to be thoroughly disagreeable, and, profiting by our misfortune, seemed determined to give us a good ducking. We had been at much pains and trouble to collect the materials for a fire; but now the undesirable supply of water from above, made it impossible to ignite them, yet although the rain came down upon us, and all around in torrents, we were denied the water we so much needed for drink. That which the muddy pools and puddles contained had been rendered quite undrinkable; and as the storm, which was accompanied by thunder and lightning, bade fair to continue throughout the night, it was no use to waste time in speculating upon the

chances of future success, especially as we had a monitor within us, urging his irresistible claims. Accordingly we piled up additional withered branches of trees on the fuel we had already collected; and a fire was soon made to burn, in spite of wind and weather.

The next essential was water; and the discovery of a small pond that seemed to promise well, was hailed with delight, although its outward appearance was anything but prepossessing. A covering of greenish weed prevented its waters from being seen; but the nature of its quality was soon made apparent by the appearance of some hundred of frogs, who were swimming about therein, with great activity. They were of two sorts, one of which identified itself by a continual croak, harsh, hoarse and loud; and this was responded to on the part of the other, by a note, long, clear, and sonorous, but mournful and melancholy in the extreme. The water, which, under any other circumstances, would have been rejected as thick, dirty, and disagreeable, was now swallowed with the utmost avidity by the whole party, parched, as we all were by the excessive heat we

had endured throughout the day. During the night the thunder rolled, and the rain fell in torrents, whilst the lightning played about our devoted heads in awful sublimity. Our fire raged like a furnace, nearly roasting us on one side, whilst the other was exposed to the fury and inclemency of the elements.

Thus we went on till break of day, when a fresh morning set in, with all the glory and beauty peculiar to these climes; and for the moment we forgot all the disasters of the previous night, as we contemplated the prospect of a cheering sunrise. All was now bustle in the camp. Every possible device was suggested for righting the coach; the Gouchos, who, by-the-bye, are glad of any excuse for sparing themselves bodily exertion, proposing that we should try what we could do with lassos and horses. I soon put a stop to the discussion, by making every one literally put his shoulder to the wheel, and thus, by using the axle at the same time, we at length brought our coach to *terra firma*, in capital style. It had suffered no serious damage; and in a few minutes we were again travelling along the road. This day we

were doomed to another long stoppage. A whole caravan of *charetas* (carts) was discovered a-head, each being drawn by six oxen. The road not being sufficiently wide to admit of our passing them, we had to pull up, and remain for some time imprisoned in a nook, whilst the slow, ponderous and creaking machines passed along at their leisure. In one of these carts were two ladies, who, I found on inquiry, were on their way to join their husbands at Salta; and had been already two months upon the road. I partook of some *maté* with them, and in return for their kindness, made them a present of some little delicacy, for which they were extremely grateful.

On leaving the wood, signs of cultivation began to appear. Presently, detached houses came in sight, with their gardens and fruit trees; one of these, a little way apart from the high road, being the post of Concha. As we were busily employed in making preparations for our daily meal, hundreds of men, newly levied, with their animals and baggage, passed along, in all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war, on their return

to their homes, after a campaign of only a few days. My friend the German, too, made his appearance, having under his charge a very beautiful woman, who turned out, on inquiry, to be the *chère amie* of the redoubtable Governor of Salta. The doctor partook of a bottle of claret with me, and then withdrew, wishing me a safe and prosperous journey. I was much struck with a bullock hide poncho, which he had in his possession, and which was so admirably tanned that it could be bent like a silk handkerchief; being, at the same time, impervious to wet.

After passing a refreshing night at this place, the next morning found us on our way, through lines of Gaucho farms, with cattle browsing about; and flourishing fields of maize and other crops. The heat being rather oppressive, I ordered a halt close to a small lake, or, to speak more correctly, a large pond, to afford us the opportunity of taking a little refreshment. The noise occasioned by our sudden stoppage, threw up a flight of woodcocks, and I had no sooner discharged my gun at them, than a number of ducks arose, giving me delightful sport. These

had scarcely settled again, before a flight of snipes were on the wing, so that I was quite bewildered, and had hardly time to load my gun, before it was again brought into requisition. I must have committed great havoc amongst those birds; but owing to the boggy nature of the soil, was enabled to recover but few of those that I had killed. The great congregation of birds at this spot was to be accounted for from the absence of water for many leagues round.

After wasting two hours at this sport, I thought it prudent to move on, but having been cautioned not to go to the next post, as it was the *fête* of the postmaster—an unmannerly hind, who, according to custom, would take the licence of being drunk for a week at a stretch, (and the possibility of obtaining horses during that period was out of the question,) I determined to go to the house of a Gaucho farmer, a man of rather a superior class. This place we soon reached; the house presenting a long *façade*, and containing a large number of rooms. The first was occupied by the master and mistress of the house, though roughly furnished; the second

was a sort of store, where liquors, cloths, materials for female dresses, knives, spurs, and other necessaries were sold. The third was a sort of barn, in which meat was hung up for sale. It appeared to be used for another purpose, for here I saw several females taking their *siesta*, secured from the heat of the noonday sun.

The whole front of the house was furnished with one general verandah, beneath which its inmates took refuge during the intense heat of the day. The horses of five or six visitors, tied to the barrier in front of the dwelling, betokened no lack of company. The master of the place received me with the greatest civility, and his wife and two or three female relatives gave me a cordial welcome. I had just commenced to feel myself quite at home, when, wholly unsuspecting what was brewing, I found myself all in a moment completely smothered with flour by some of the ladies, who rubbed my face and head all over with it, to the general amusement of all present.

I was not long in discovering that this was the carnival time; and on looking round, I

found that Battista had shared the same fate as myself. We now, by his assistance, soon armed ourselves with a good supply of flour from our own stock, and had a glorious revenge. Notwithstanding this frolic, we were all good friends, and as the day wore on, not liking my miller-like garb, I went to the river hard by, and took a delightful bath. Returning to the party fresh and clean, I was foolish enough to anticipate a cessation of all hostilities, but I was mistaken. My appearance amongst them was the signal for a renewed assault, and in a few minutes my dress was as white as ever. I therefore made up my mind to undergo the ordeal, and cheerfully entered into the innocent mirth of the company, although freely indulged in at my expense. After this I made a bargain with the wily Argentine for a relay of forty horses, for which he made me pay full dearly; but I was glad to get on at any rate, as the state of the country, from various reports which came to my ears, was anything but tranquil.

On the morrow we forded the river, consisting of several channels, and entered upon

an open country, which we traversed for many leagues, till we arrived at the small town of Franca. Feeling inclined to see if we could get any bread, or luxury of any description within it, I made my entry, and looked out for the best shop in the place, out of a number of perhaps not more than two or three. This one appeared to belong to the *alcalde*, or judge, and unfortunately had been bought up by the troops we had previously met upon the road. However, I managed to get a few loaves of bread, and on looking round, when leaving the shop, I discovered a bottle of Macassar oil.

Feeling astonished that such an article should have found its way into central America, I demanded of the *alcalde* some explanation of so strange a circumstance, but he was unable to solve the mystery, telling me that that little bottle had puzzled himself and neighbours for many a day. I told him what it contained, and gave him half a dollar for it, glad to possess anything that brought back to my mind pleasing recollections of old England. He was but too glad to part with it, as he would be thus spared further fruit-

less discussion, to which its presence there was continually giving rise. I procured also at this place, some bottles of Carloon wine, which afterwards proved very grateful to us upon the road. In our subsequent journey we began to meet those numerous troops of horses and mules that form, at certain seasons of the year, the successful speculations of the Argentine provinces. These supply the Bolivian market, as well as that of Peru, and make a lengthened march to the very gates of Lima.

Entering a plain covered with thicket, I was astonished to find it swarming with snakes of a most venomous character, which were basking in the sun, and gliding about in all directions. I here met with some horsemen, who gave me some particulars respecting an engagement which had recently taken place a little further on. They were as follows:—The young officer before mentioned, who had made his appearance with his followers in the vicinity of Salta, and who, finding no sympathy there, had fallen back upon his native city in hopes of better success, arrived at the latter place with about

a hundred and fifty men, and summoned the governor to admit them and proclaim the supremacy of General Urquiza. This the governor positively refused to do, as they were not able to present their credentials, showing their power to treat on such a subject. He, however, offered to admit them as neutrals, until the voice of the province upon the question should be ascertained.

This liberal offer was at once rejected, and an immediate engagement ensued; the levies from the city, and the reinforcements from Salta, amounted to about three thousand men; and against such a force as this, this handful of adventurers, who were thus attempting to revolutionize the province at their own charges, without the sanction, or even knowledge, of General Urquiza, were placed in battle array. They fought most valiantly, but the overwhelming numbers opposed to them rendered their desperate courage of no avail. The greatest part of them were killed, and the rest taken prisoners.

The young hero, whose firmness and intrepidity deserved a better fate, cut his way,

accompanied by two or three of his closest friends, through the surrounding columns. At this juncture the horse of one of these retreating officers was shot, and fell to the ground, throwing his rider, who was instantly pounced upon by the soldiery. The commander, upon this, jumped from his horse, and, striking at all who approached him with his sword, endeavoured to extricate his friend from under the fallen beast. He succeeded in doing so, and was about to assist him to mount upon the crupper of his own, and so possibly make a hasty escape, when the *balas** were thrown with so much precision that the commanding officer had his legs entangled in them, and so securely bound that he fell to the ground. In a moment he and his comrade were made prisoners. A hasty court-martial was formed: he was sentenced to die, and was shot dead

* Three stones covered with hide, and attached to as many thongs. These swung round the head by one of the thongs, and the whole then let loose, it sweeps along the earth with much velocity. When in its flight it encounters any resisting obstacle, it twists itself around it, and makes it perfectly secure.

upon the spot. The other prisoners were kept in custody, till on the following day the news arrived of the defeat of General Rosas, in the great battle which took place near Buenos Ayres.

The presence of a few farms upon the road announced the vicinity of the small town of Tapia, passing through which, we arrived at the post, an establishment consisting of three empty mud cottages, tenanted by two dirty women and several dirty children. In this uninviting place nothing but a little *choelos* (Indian corn green in the pods,) could be got for love or money. I made my bed in the open air, as the fear of vermin before my eyes would not suffer me to trust myself to the uncertainties of more sheltered accommodation. The next morning, owing to my own forethought in having bespoken it the evening previous, I had a plentiful supply of milk, which was procured for me, before the cattle were turned out of the *corral.* It appeared to me very strange that the people at this post should lack everything but meat, and live a hard sort of life, without the most common luxu-

ries, whilst they had such quantities of milk without making any use of it.

On leaving the place early in the morning, we entered a forest, which stretched over a succession of steep hills. We had arrived at the bottom of one of these, and were about to make the ascent of another yet steeper than the rest, when we were overtaken by a violent thunder-storm, accompanied by some heavy rain. This hill being formed of *grada*, our horses could get no footing, and we completely stuck fast in the mud. Every expedient was tried to overcome the difficulty of the ascent, but all to no purpose. At last, a number of horsemen who happened to be passing by at the time, came to our aid, and we began to be confident of success. Ten horses were attached in couples to the carriage, but their efforts were unavailing. The instant that we had gained a few paces it was found necessary to place branches of trees under the wheels to prevent their retrograding further than they had advanced. At length a thought struck me, and that was to place two horses on the top of the hill, and attached to the others by

means of lassos tied together. This contrivance succeeded admirably, and the lumbering machine was brought up in a trice.

After getting out of our disagreeable predicament, we found that we were about entering upon a most beautiful and enchanting tract of country, the outskirts of the delightful city and province of Tucuman. *Haciendas* with their rich cultivations of sugar-cane, maize, and other crops, indigenous to the soil, were met with in great abundance. Little forests of orange trees, forming groves and, avenues struck upon the sight in all directions. On one side of the road, a beautiful park with its adjoining garden and orchard conducted to the country residence of the Governor, a man of sound and sterling worth, a friend to commerce, and a great encourager of foreign talent, and whose judicious outlay of the public money is abundantly evinced by the many and varied embellishments he has added to the city. The house in which he resided seemed of a superior order and very comfortable, and provided with all the appurtenances necessary to a country life.

On making our entry into the city, we passed along several streets of good houses, and soon found ourselves in the Plaza, a spacious quadrangle formed by some new buildings of a very superior character. The principal church or cathedral, which was near its completion, promised to be a most beautiful structure, with its imposing towers elegantly decorated by French artists. Besides this, there were several other showy edifices, such as the Cavildo, a well-designed and appropriate building, numerous *cafés*, shops, and private dwellings.

Instead of taking up my quarters at an hotel, I sent on one of my men in advance, to secure me furnished apartments at a private house. The houses in this city are generally on a large scale, having the whole of the tenements on the ground floor. These surround several court-yards, and include rooms and kitchens for servants. Close at hand is a garden and orchard of orange trees planted in rows. This umbrageous retreat is often occupied by the family during the day, as the intense heat of the sun within doors during some portion of it, is almost

insupportable. The night, when the moon is up, and people walk abroad to enjoy the cool and refreshing air, is the *acme* of all that is charming. Every doorway presents the prospect of a select party of ladies and gentlemen in the enjoyment of social intercourse; the former, fan in hand, tastefully dressed in white, and exhibiting, like their Spanish ancestors, a solitary rose as a head-dress, in the midst of their beautiful black hair. The apartments are well lighted, and show, through the open windows, many an article of costly and well-arranged furniture. Parties of ladies, followed by female black servants, are seen hurrying along to go the stated round of visits. Then, at a later hour, they congregate in the saloons, and amuse themselves with singing, music, and dancing. At a certain season of the year most of the families of distinction in this city visit their estates, and return again to town to look to their shops and stores. If a community ever deserved the name of shopkeepers, the term is applicable to the inhabitants of this place.

During my short sojourn there, the news arrived of the overthrow of Rosas, and the

proclamation of General Urquiza, giving a general armistice to persons of all parties and opinions. This intelligence was received with great rejoicing, and the illuminations which took place in consequence sufficiently bespoke the general sentiments of the people. It was curious to notice the universal metamorphosis which took place in the course of a few hours. The compulsory badges of the *Unitarios*—a red ribbon worn by every male round his hat, and another attached to his button-hole, and inscribed with a representation of death, and invectives against the Federals, together with the blood-colour red of the Rosas—were changed, on the instant, for the unpretending blue of his now successful antagonist.

The ladies of the country are exceedingly kind to strangers. No sooner do they hear of an arrival than they send their servants with presents of fruit, flowers, sweetmeats, and preserves, together with friendly greetings and invitations. When the strangers happen to be ladies, they sometimes make a personal visit. On the evening of my arrival a serenade was performed in my honour, as also on

several subsequent occasions. The house which I rented was in the suburbs, and had a delightful orange orchard attached to it. It was very lonely, and people were continually endeavouring to frighten me by detailing awful murders, which, it was stated, had taken place on the premises and in the neighbourhood. All this, however, did not prevent my being very comfortable in my seclusion, where I lived quite retired, and away from the general bustle of society. I made the acquaintance of several amiable and agreeable families. Amongst the rest, those of Dr. Frias and Senor Silva. The members of the latter made themselves rather conspicuous by singing from their balcony the national anthem in favour of Urquiza.

One of the wheels of my carriage having fallen to pieces, I was obliged to have a new one made by an Italian wheelwright, who did not fail to make me pay pretty dearly for the job. Finding it necessary to purchase a supply of sundry articles for my use upon the road, I visited the shops of several French persons who were living here in

great comfort, and seemed to be making money. If the tide of immigration could only be diverted for a time towards this quarter, it appears to me that this province is capable, in an agricultural point of view, of largely supplying an export commerce. The sugar-cane, coffee, cocoa, cotton, fruits of the most delicious kinds, and an abundance of superior cattle, offer to the enterprising and industrious a certain field of ultimate success. The united provinces of Cordova, Tucuman, and Salta, have already gained a well-merited reputation for their tanned leather, saddlery, and boots, superior to that of other parts of South America.

CHAPTER V.

Los Pozos—Santo Iago—Saladella lakes—Mode of crossing the river—Abundance of game—Cordova—Los Indios bravos—Deer-stalking in the Pampas—Locusts near Gallegos—Il Rosario—Tornado—Buenos Ayres—Description of the city—Some account of General Rosas—Monte Video: its important mercantile position—Passage to Genoa and London.

I LEFT Tucuman with the conviction that it stood unrivalled as the garden of the Argentine Republic. On quitting the place, the road, which consisted of an agreeable mixture of wood and plain, and occasional large tracts covered with aromatic shrubs, became after a time almost impassable, owing to a deep marsh which had been caused by the late rains. Our progress was consider-

ably impeded by our being obliged to drive through a little forest of young trees and bushes, which were bent down under the weight of our heavy vehicle, and regained their form as soon as it had passed. It was now necessary to be on the alert, as the road was reputed to be infested with robbers. The stages in this province were much shorter than usual; but, by taking the precaution to send some one on in advance to advertise our approach, we avoided the unpleasant necessity of having to wait until the postmasters could collect their animals, which were, in many instances, grazing at a distance of several miles.

The post of Talachussi furnished the first relay. The next was that of Los Pozos; and, as we reached it about sunset, I determined to cut short our day's work, and take up our quarters the e for the night. The accommodation afforded us consisted of one small room in a mud hovel, the postmaster and his family occupying a similar dwelling. As there were several *peones*, or day-labourers, at the place, two or three young women belonging to the establishment were busily

employed in preparing their food. Thus we had three large fires blazing away at once, at each of which certain culinary operations were going on, which were watched with the most intense interest by the respective parties congregated about them. A fine sheep was procured for us, and in a very short time prepared for the spit. Then, seated in a circle round the fire, our party looked on during the process of roasting, every now and then turning it round, whilst our appetites were rendered, if possible, keener by the tantalizing sight.

Having well feasted ourselves, we retired early to rest, and were up again with the early dawn. When our horses were ready, we resumed our journey, and passed the posts of Bramella, Topero, and Acausta, without anything of note transpiring beyond the ceremony of catching the horses in the *corrales*, by means of the lasso. Some of these animals, just fresh from grass and half broken in, commenced all sorts of antics. The mode of taming a horse, under these circumstances, is very curious. The Gaucho upon his back immediately sticks his spurs, generally some

pounds in weight, into his sides, makes him go at full tilt, pulls him up short, turns him round and round, brings him up again—and so on, till he is quite exhausted. This does not last more than five minutes, but, at the end of that time, the fiercest horse is rendered as docile as a lamb.

At the last-named place we rested for the night, the accommodation being of a similar description to that we had found at the previous post. The next day brought us to the town and province of Santo Iago. It is a long, straggling, and uninteresting place, without half-a-dozen decent houses to boast of. The intense heat which we here experienced, together with the swarms of musquitos which buzzed about, and the dismal prospect of a host of forlorn and ruinous houses, were enough to give a person the horrors. The post itself, fortunately, was an exception to the general rule, containing one good room which was habitable, the other buildings connected with the establishment being detached. My men procured a sheep, which, together with an abundance of grapes, pomegranates, and other fruits, brought to us

by the women for sale, furnished us with an excellent meal. The Governor of this place is a very superior and gentlemanly person; and, I believe, much liked and respected by the people.

How to account for the want of improvements in the town, and sundry local defects which intrude themselves upon the notice, I know not. I took a stroll as far as the river, for the benefit of a bathe, but the force of the stream was so great that I was taken completely off my legs, without the power of resistance, and the result might have been fatal, had I not happily caught hold of a projecting embankment which stood in the way. The delights of the bath are much resorted to in this intensely hot province; and men, women, and children paddle about in the water together, in a promiscuous manner, quite unfamiliar to our northern notions; but, as with us, habit becomes a second nature, and there such things are done quite unblushingly. The governor of the place kindly presented me with an open letter, addressed to the postmasters on the

road, enjoining upon them the prompt execution of my commands. This proved to me of very great service during my stay in the province. The torments which we had endured throughout the night from myriads of troublesome musquitos, made us by no means disinclined, when morning came, to continue our journey.

When I left Salta, I was presented by a considerate friend, with two bottles of cana, mixed with *cascarilla* (Peruvian bark), with the positive injunction to take a wine-glass full the first thing every morning, to keep off the ague, which is sure to attack travellers in passing through the extensive forests and marshes to be met with on the road, unless the proper precautions and remedies are used. This injunction I had entirely neglected, and I had scarcely quitted the precincts of Santo Iago, before the effects of the malady upon myself became very apparent. After a time all vestige of the forest was lost, and nothing was to be seen but large plains, with here and there patches of cover, near to which a few ostriches, who were industriously feeding, alarmed at our ap-

proach, took to flight in beautiful style. We made our first change of horses at the post of Igero; but at the succeeding one, that of Perco, we lost the greatest part of the day, owing to our having to deal with a drunken postmaster, whose horses were many miles away grazing, and whom we had the greatest difficulty in prevailing upon to send for them. We found that we had no alternative but to pass the night at the house, as the horses could not be collected and brought up before the following morning. Taking my gun, therefore, and a boy for a retriever, I managed to bag a few birds, and thus while away the time very pleasantly.

On my return to the house, I observed a bird, somewhat resembling a teal, flying into a nest, formed on the branches of a large tree which stood in the yard. On my making a noise, it soon took wing again, when I fired, and it fell to the ground. This successful sport quite delighted the old postmaster and his household, who seemed from that time to be more civil on the strength of it. We gained one thing by our unintentional delay, and that was a plentiful supply of meat, milk,

and eggs. The following day brought us, by a slow descent, to the Canada post, after which we arrived in the vicinity of the Saladella lakes, which are very extensive. We determined to pass the night at the post of Bockeron, and early in the morning to procure saddle-horses for myself and Battista, so as to have some hours' sport, whilst the carriage and baggage passed the dangerous river of Saladella—an operation requiring a great deal of time.

It was at this river, that the Brazilian *Chargé d'Affaires* and his family met with a serious accident in the loss of a nursery-maid, and I believe, one of his *peones*, who were drowned whilst making the passage. The mode of crossing the river is somewhat singular. A couple of strong men throw themselves into the water, holding in their mouths a lasso, attached to a dried bullock's hide, the corners of which are looped up, so as to form a kind of seat. Into this, the passenger cautiously enters, as the least indiscretion is likely to occasion an upset. Once quietly settled in this precarious birth, he floats with ease, and is drawn across the water by the

swimmers, who land their burden in safety on the other side. This process is repeated for each individual of the party, and at last the luggage is similarly treated. The horses are generally made to swim across much higher up the stream, where the breadth is greater, though the current be less strong.

The mode usually adopted for getting the coach across, is to attach long lassos to it, before and aft, and then drag it through the depths by horse-power. This I particularly objected to, on account of its wetting the interior; and therefore, I had it conveyed much higher up the river, when it made the transit in the shallows without any inconvenience. The cause of the sad accident to the unfortunate maid-servant, is attributed to her fear of passing across in the skin, choosing in preference, to keep her place in the carriage. The fatal catastrophe was occasioned by the heavy rains, which had rendered the current in the shallow parts of the river so strong, as to carry it away for some distance; and finally, to immerge it before rescue could arrive. The scene at this ferry is remarkably agreeable and exciting. An accumula-

tion of passengers, and troops of mules and horses are gathered together, on both sides of the river, awaiting till their turn arrive, to make the transit. A few fires might be seen burning, and around these were seated small parties, preparing their daily meal. In some places, those who have already passed the river are to be seen fast asleep upon the ground, wearied out with the unavoidable exertions they had used in the conveyance across of their cargoes and baggage.

After a night in which I was well-nigh devoured alive by the musquitos, Battista and myself mounted our horses and started off well prepared for the chase. We soon came up to the precincts of the lake, the nature of the marshy ground in the neighbourhood preventing a very near approach to the great body of water. This, judging from the view we had of it from the point whereon we stood, appeared to be very considerable. The thousands of ducks, geese, and, I am told, even swans, which fluttered about in all directions, is inconceivable. So great was their number that they formed large black patches on the water, resembling

little islands, the perpetual noise and clatter which they made alone dissipating the illusion. On the report of my gun flights of them arose, one after the other, into the air, like a succession of dense clouds.

The musquitos, which were bad enough before in all conscience, now became quite intolerable. They arose on the margin of the banks of the Saladellas in such myriads as to make everything appear as if seen through a veil of thin gauze. Any portion of the face or hands left exposed, but for a moment, was immediately covered with them, and the poor horses, whose bodies were more unprotected than our own, were annoyed beyond description, and they writhed in a most restless state of suffering beneath the terrible infliction. It was in the midst of as fine a sport as heart could desire that I could scarcely get a shot, and was fairly driven from the field by the invading army of these, my tiny enemies. Right glad was I to gallop off from the scene of my defeat, and to find myself at last at a narrow part of the river, where I might enjoy the luxury of shooting without any of the attendant evils I had just

experienced. This situation was likewise much frequented by ducks, hares, and small coveys. Unfortunately, the birds invariably kept over the water, and although I occasionally brought one down, I had the satisfaction of seeing it carried away with the stream, without ever a chance of getting possession of it. As the day advanced I left the scene of this amusement, and, having rejoined my people, jogged on as usual.

Having changed our mules at the post of the Guardia Monté, we hurried on as fast as we could, and soon accomplished the next stage, and purchased a few eggs at the Cimbolar post, in case of need. With fresh cattle, passing La Orketta, the night had long set in before we reached the post of Kachi, which turned out to be the best we had met with for many a day. We were furnished with a clean and comfortable apartment, water to wash with, and other comforts rarely to be met with in these localities. During these overland journeys washing is not so easy an operation, since it is necessary to besmear the face with cold cream, lard, or grease, to prevent the skin from cracking or peeling

off through exposure to the air, and the intense heat of the noon-day sun. After dinner, tea, cigars, and a refreshing night's rest, we left this, the last post in the province of Santo Iago. The Pampas now began to stretch their weary levels on every hand, an occasional patch of wood or cover at times relieving the monotony. Here numbers of ostriches, in their native fields, might be seen feeding in careless security.

We now entered the province of Cordova, and arrived at the post of Bella, which was kept by a miltary officer, the commandant at the station on the frontiers. I found him remarkably kind and hospitable, but, owing to a slight illness, obliged to keep his bed. I recommended him to try the effect of some trifling remedy which I gave him, and so confident was he of the result, that scarcely had he made the first trial before he felt, or fancied he felt, himself better; so astonishing is the faith which these people repose in any medicine administered by a foreigner.

After leaving this place a severe accident happened to one of my men, named Cose; an excellent fellow, succeessor to Pedro,

who, having taken the ague, was prevented from proceeding further than Tucuman. Cose was riding one of the leaders at one of those sharp turnings where it is necessary to pull at one of the traces to prevent its being entangled in the feet of the wheelers, when his fingers became caught in it, and one was taken clean off, bone and all. This made the poor fellow exceedingly faint, so that I was obliged to leave him a horse that he might overtake us at leasure. He joined us again just before sunset, as we were entering the post of Piedritos.

This place most certainly verified its name, for nothing was to be had but *stones*, and my poor Gauchos had to retire to rest with empty stomachs, and dream all sorts of invectives against the people of the post, and their own hard fortune. Early next morning we were all glad to get away ; and so, without loss of time, horses were put to the carriage and off we started. As we galloped over the Pampas to the post of Rosario, we found Cose, who had preceded us, with the horses ready for the relay, so that we were again *en route*, without a moment's delay.

At this point we encountered another carriage, containing certain delegates from the conqueror, General Urquiza, on their way to regulate the affairs of the province.

These gentlemen were exceedingly glad to see us, and gave us perfect assurance of the practicability of an easy journey to Buenos Ayres; the army, after the decisive battle that had been fought, being newly organized, and confined within its encampment in the suburbs of the city. The vast extended plains of the Pampas, with scarcely an object to rest the eye upon, and utterly devoid of any signs of life or human habitation, strike the traveller with a feeling of melancholy loneliness. This enhances greatly the pleasure of a casual meeting upon the road, and as the two coaches now stopped abreast of each other, all parties seemed to participate in the general delight, in which the very horses seemed to share. After numerous kind inquiries about absent friends, and the exchange of a few passing jokes, the whips cracked once more, and away we started, perhaps never to meet again.

At the post of San Pedro, which we next

reached, we made a purchase of some ribs of beef which hung temptingly for sale. The enormous number of cattle which abounds in the Pampas is most astonishing. Thousands of mares, in fold, crowd upon the sight, as a long series of *haciendas* appear in the distance. Cows and bullocks are in like proportion. It is no uncommon thing for a *hacienda* to have as many as twenty or even thirty thousand head of cattle upon the estate. Passing by the post of Tala, that of Entequassi afforded us shelter for the night. The next day brought us to the post of Belesdero, where we purchased a splendid capon, and some *choelos*. As we advanced, there were indications of our near approach to Cordova—once a city noted for its learning and refinement, and the centre of Jesuitical power in this part of the New World. Many of the *haciendas*, which now began to multiply on both sides of the way, were of a monastic character, having small chapels attached to them, and surrounded with flourishing gardens, and grounds filled with luxuriant timber, betokening the agricultural taste and industry introduced by

the fathers. We now entered the Alto-grande post, which was soon followed by that of Salista, which formed the termination of our day's work.

This establishment, consisting of several neat and comfortable buildings, was kept by a Cordovan widow, and her two daughters, who were very fair samples of the beauty of the province. These ladies rather prided themselves as blue-stockings, and certainly went so far to keep up their character, as to maintain a continual battery of small talk, which seemed quite inexhaustible. Another qualification which they possessed, was an unbounded curiosity to see everything that I had with me. This was harmless enough in its way, did they not go the length of asking for everything which they saw. I did not exactly fall in with these little peculiarities, but had I not contributed a few trifles from my general stock, I certainly should have been kept up talking all night; and, as I was in need of rest, this was not at all what I wanted.

In the morning, we galloped away to the post of Il Pozo de la Baca. The country

had now become truly beautiful, exhibiting a perfect terrestrial Paradise; and in the midst of this rustic garden, cultivated to the greatest extent, and abounding in luxuriant wood, stretched upon a level plain, stood the city of Cordova. The spires of many churches were seen, and several large, imposing buildings, once used as monasteries, but now deserted and fast falling into decay. On the expulsion of the Jesuits, this city lost its importance, and its commerce took another direction, from the fact of the wealthy Spaniards, who had been drawn there by a devotional regard for the abode of the learned fathers, no longer continuing to take up their residence there.

The last post before we arrived there, was that of La Boca de Rosario, opposite to which was a monastery, with its church and gardens. The exterior of the church which I inspected, was still in excellent condition, and in point of decoration was extremely chaste, possessing none of those tawdry ornaments which so often disfigure the religious buildings in these parts. Gold cornices, on a white ground, composed the

panneling, and the roof consisted of elaborate stonework, in very high relief. There were two altar-pieces, one for the grand altar, and the other for a small chapel, but both of these appeared to be but bad copies of an indifferent style of art. The monastery itself was in a far more dilapidated state, its several cells and galleries seeming to be made a receptacle for all sorts of agricultural materials and implements.

In the centre of the court-yard were the remains of what once was an elegant fountain; but now there was only a small trickling stream, as clear as crystal, overflowing its shattered basin. The gardens, which had evidently been laid out with care, and due regard to order, were now a mass of wild and unruly vegetation, some of their avenues and shady walks being quite impervious to the sun's bright rays, and offering the coolest retreat possible for quiet solitude and meditation. There were orange orchards in abundance, and throughout these were erected avenues of brick columns, supporting beams, on which the rich and prolific vine luxuriated, forming with its thick clusters,

a perfect roofing of its luscious fruit. The grateful banana, the pomegranate, and the pine-apple, were mingled in the wildest profusion; and nature's choicest fruits and flowers, as they thrive in their savage exuberance, formed one continued and entangled maze. This monastery no longer retains its former sacred and venerable character, having for some time been devoted to other purposes. It has now been sold for a *hacienda.*

With many reflections, which a saunter in these deserted grounds called forth in my mind, I bade adieu to this interesting spot. Advancing upon the road, my attention was continually diverted to various buildings once belonging to the Jesuits, which line the wayside. I noticed a splendid mansion, originally a monastic college, but now converted into a seminary or national school, belonging to the city. Attached to all these buildings are spacious grounds, where these men of leisure spent a great part of their time in the study and practice of agricultural pursuits. The Jesuits, as a body, were not only men of great learning, but did not

think it beneath their dignity or calling to render themselves useful to their fellow-creatures, by the introduction of the several arts and sciences in those countries in which they settled. The benefits which they conferred on the natives of these countries, not only rendered them more civilized, but so influenced their minds, as to make the dogmatic precepts of religion take a firmer hold upon them than they would otherwise have done. Where the Jesuits took up their abode, poverty, which makes men for the most part attentive only to those subjects which appertain to their temporal welfare, was wholly unknown. Abundance of grain, wine, and poultry, fruits, and every article of vegetation, stocked the market. The idle and profligate learned lessons of industry from their religious pastors, who not merely contented themselves with teaching to other men their duties, but actually set them the example of careful and industrious habits. They performed themselves the offices of daily labour, guiding the plough, and toiling with their own hands in the several departments of

agriculture. I am very far from desirous of justifying their tenets, or entering upon a metaphysical discussion on the peculiarities of their creed. This I leave in other hands, as beyond my province or capability; but this much I will assert, that as regards the temporal benefit which they conferred upon the countries where they established the Roman Catholic religion, the Jesuits are entitled to our highest praise. They taught the indolent to work; and so far enlightened the ignorance of the poor savages with whom they came in contact, that they were, in process of time, enabled profitably to apply their industry to the proper culture and enjoyment of the fruits of the earth. In a country where nature had been so peculiarly bountiful, this was no difficult task; and we now see many parts of the New World, in spite of the superstition and utter ignorance on many other subjects which still prevail, teeming with the richest grain, and offering to the stranger, the fairest fruits, and other products of the ground, that were ever reared by the hand of man.

Coming up to the bed of a large river, in

which two or three shallow streams were silently flowing, we passed over it with the greatest ease, and reached the opposite shore in safety. A number of women, in rather scanty attire, were seen washing clothes upon the banks. Driving through a jungle of underwood, we now began to approach the suburbs of the city, indicated by numerous cottages, in the front of which several children, in a perfect state of nudity, and covered with dirt and sand, were amusing themselves. On seeing our carriage they ran into the houses to tell their parents, and presently we had quite a concourse of persons assembled at their doors to see the strangers pass along. The city of Cordova, which, at a distance, had a very prepossessing aspect, lost many of its charms, as we advanced nearer. The streets and houses, which in former times must have been worthy of its fame, were now almost in ruins, and, in many cases, wholly deserted. An air of gloom and desolation seemed to hang over the place. This might be partly accounted for by the character of the Government, the man who now holds the post of Governor being entirely

without education, though despotic and tyrannical in the extreme. He is extremely grasping and avaricious, and although his son married the daughter of a Scotch doctor, who had resided in the country for more than thirty years, he is so suspicious of all foreigners, that he loses no occasion of showing his dislike.

I believe that this ill-feeling towards them is more particularly shown in the case of the French, of whom a great number are residing here, and who have incurred his bitter hatred owing to their noisy and egotistical boastings of liberty, a thing not to be tolerated in a country which is governed on the principle of arbitrary rule.

During my stay here I took up my abode in the house of a friend, but had scarcely set my foot within the house before I was attacked by as severe an attack of the ague as could by possibility be endured. My host, being acquainted with a Yankee doctor, who lived close by, and who was regarded as a very tolerable man in his profession, sent word to him of my illness, requesting his attendance, and telling him, to render him

all the more upon the alert, that his patient was a countryman, in fact, an Englishman. This information had not the desired effect. "Let him die," said the Yankee, closing his Christian answer with an oath. I was at the time suffering too much to stand much parleying, and, therefore, pocketing the insult as best I could, I sallied forth to the Plaza, and entering a chemist's shop, ordered half a tumbler of Peruvian bark. Mixing this with water, I swallowed it on the instant, and the fever soon passed away. In the evening I repeated the dose, with the addition of some Quinine pills, and in a short time I found that I had accomplished a radical cure.

The above-mentioned American and several Frenchmen possess large establishments in this city for the tanning of leather, which is so much used in this and the adjoining provinces. This, no doubt, is a most profitable speculation. I found it necessary to change here the whole of my dollars for the abominable paper money of Buenos Ayres, the postmasters upon the road in every instance indignantly refusing to receive the former. I

likewise had to get my coach made more secure, as it was threatening to fall to pieces, and I had no wish to encounter the delays and inconveniences of another break-down.

Having conducted these and other necessary arrangements, I gave orders for our start early the next morning; but when the time came, I found two out of my four Gauchos so drunk, that they could hardly stand. Notwithstanding this, I had the horses put to, and the two delinquents lifted on their respective mules, where, like true Gauchos, they contrived admirably to keep their seats, although, from the helpless predicament in which I had just seen them, this was an exploit on their part which I should not very confidently have ventured to predicate. We soon arrived at the first post, that of La Punta del Monte, the vast Pampas over which we travelled still exhibiting enormous herds of cattle that stretched away on all sides to the very horizon.

The post of Olivar, which we next gained, begun to assume that fortified aspect which indicated our near approach to the country of the *Indios bravos* (savages). Each house

had a tower or citadel attached to it; and, from this, an effective defence might be made against the Indians beneath, who always make their attack on horseback. These strongholds being built of brick or mud, afforded great security in the night-time; for the Indians, who often shoot arrows with brands of fire attached to them, against the houses, occasionally set fire to their roofs, which, for the most part, are thatched with straw, and the inmates are thus consumed within their own trenches.

The post of Oncativo formed our resting-place for the night, where a number of Frenchmen—manufacturers and artizans—as well as some inhabitants of Buenos Ayres, but then residents at Cordova, who left the latter city soon after ourselves in order to gain the benefit of our well-armed equipage, hastened on to overtake us. This gratuitous offer of their company was not in the least disagreeable, since we generally arrived at our night's lodging two hours before them, and had the first choice of all the rooms; and during the night, the additional reinforcement of twelve persons armed, and mostly

Europeans, gave us great confidence, as we were thereby enabled the better to make face against the Indians, their mode of warfare consisting of surprise, and their plundering parties never exceeding a hundred, or a hundred and fifty at the most.

After exchanging civilities with our fellow-travellers, we started again early in the morning, leaving them to follow us at their leisure. The plains now began visibly to lose their character of pasture lands, their horned inhabitants gradually diminishing in numbers, and the *haciendas*, which hitherto appeared in close proximity to each other, now occurred but occasionally. The vast monotonous level stretched away on every hand in great luxuriance, varied only by dark patches, occasioned by a few scattered dry thistles of the past year. Numerous hillocks, perforated by small holes, marked the burrows of colonies of *biscachos* (an animal resembling a European rabbit, but with a tail like a squirrel). At the mouths of these burrows these little creatures generally piled up several dried stalks of the giant thistle peculiar to these parts, which,

in a great measure, concealed their haunts. I perceived also many bones of birds and small animals congregated in the vicinity, no doubt with a similar object. During the greater part of the day this situation is wholly monopolized by a few owls, which, when disturbed, shrink from the gaze and near approach of the casual passer-by. The *biscachos* are to be met with in great numbers on the outside of their burrows at the times of sunrise and sunset, and then they afford plentiful occupation to the enterprising sportsman.

We passed the posts of Los Esquinillas and Chinaris, and finally made that of Tropochio our halting-place for the night. The stages being very short, we arrived here in good time; and whilst the cooking was going forward, in preparation for our dinner, I took up my gun, hoping to get some sport, as a considerable quantity of wood and cover stood in the vicinity of the post. My attention was soon attracted to a number of monster hares, which made off before I had time to get a shot at them. After running for some distance, they turned round and

commenced feeding and gamboling as before, when I fired away at them for some time, making some of them roll over. However, they managed to get again upon their legs, and scampered away. At last, having loaded with a charge of patent shot, I was lucky enough to send it right through one unfortunate animal. He rolled over in reality, and, when I came up to him, I found I was well rewarded for my pains. The weight of this puss was such that I was obliged to drag it after me, it being a great deal too heavy for me to carry upon one arm. The flesh of this animal differs from that of the European hare, in that the meat, instead of being dark, as with us, is perfectly white, like that of the rabbit.

The other coach arrived at the post much later than our own, on account of one of the wheels catching fire; and on our companions making their appearance, we all spent a most comfortable night, in mutual security. On the following day we passed the posts of Billia Nueva, La Heradura, and Lescina Medran; the latter place being a little town, in which was stationed a detachment of sol-

diers, supposed to keep the barbarous Indians in check—this being a part of the country which they thickly inhabited, and known by the name of the Santa Fé Province. The pastures had now become extremely beautiful—their magnificent crops of herbage, which seemed sufficient to fatten cattle for the supply of Europe, being all but deserted, and serving as food only to some herds of deer that were scattered over the extensive meadows. The sight to a sportsman is, as might be supposed, beyond description exhilarating, consisting, as it does, of hundreds of these fine deer, which he passes every day; but they take to feed at so respectful a distance from the high road, that, except in the case of a couple, or more, which had wandered within rifle shot, I had no opportunity of testing my skill in bringing them down.

It would be feasible enough for a party of gentlemen to make a pilgrimage to these parts for the purpose of a shooting season. It is only necessary to take a passage to Rio Janeiro in one of the Brazilian line of steamers, thence in a small steamer to Monte

Video and Buenos Ayres, and from the latter place in one of the Italian schooners to the Rosario, or Santa Fé. A ride, then, will bring a person to these shooting-grounds, and this may easily be done in about forty or fifty days. A hunting party, well equipped, may bid defiance to any attack from the hostile Indians, and actually revel in sport. Besides this inducement I may mention that the ground is literally covered with partridges, some of them being of an enormous size. As the coach passes on, coveys of these birds arise on both sides of the way, striking the ear with the sound of their peculiar flutter. Many will appear to rise from unde the very horses' feet, whilst others will run along the ground and scarcely be distinguishable from it, so great is the resemblance between the colour of their bodies and that of the soil. On starting, soon after day-break, I have seen traces of them in the long grass extending like longitudinal lines from various parts of the plain to the spot whereon I was standing. A young Irish friend of mine at Salta gave me a very interesting description of his deer-stalking during a journey of some

months which he had made through these districts on his way to Salta. I will endeavour to tell his story in his own words.

"We travelled in carts, and leaving them at sunrise, with three guns and a guide, we traversed the plain, which was literally strewed with partridges. These we quite disdained to shoot at, as we could almost kick them with our feet.* Besides this, we were afraid of firing from fear of disturbing the deer. However, we had quite enough to do in keeping off the musquitos, which abound here to an incredible extent, and disturbed our equanimity considerably. A person is, in fact, for ever slapping his own face; but, by adopting the plan in vogue in this country for keeping at bay these relentless persecutors, I found that I was saved a deal of trouble and annoyance. The mode is this:—You take your silk handkerchief and double

* This I firmly believe to be a fact, as I have often bought of the boys at the posts dozens of these birds which had been thus caught. A long stick is furnished with a noose and a slip-knot at the end of it. This is thrown over the necks of the birds, and in this way numbers of them are entrapped.

it so as to form a triangle; you then place it upon your head, pinning it under the nose so as to let two points dangle loosely in front and the other behind. The eyes and nose only are thus exposed; and the action of walking produces such a delightful artificial breeze, that, besides the enjoyment of the luxury of a cool head, you have the satisfaction of effectually keeping the musquitos at a distance. Having gained the banks of a small stream, which formed a little bay, the only watering-place for many a league round, myself and my companions took up our positions in such a manner as that, the instant one shot should be fired, each of us in succession should fire his gun at the herd, as it passed rapidly by us. Lying down in the long grass, we awaited in solemn silence the approach of the opening day. A faint ray of light was seen in the East, and as it became gradually stronger it cast a slight streak of red on the fleeting clouds.

"Just at that moment a black line was seen on the distant horizon, and then another in a different quarter; then several others; and, presently, herds of deer were plainly

perceptible, advancing in single file to one common centre—the watering-creek, where we were lying in ambush. Our hearts beat within us with a sportsman's delight, as we descried these nimble animals coming on apace, holding aloft their wide-spreading antlers, and shaking their fat haunches, in anticipation of a cool and refreshing morning's draught. Many of these columns pushed on into the water without perceiving us. One large buck, taking the direction to where I was concealed, nearly stumbled over me, and was so astonished at the unexpected meeting that he turned upon me, and tried with his horns to pin me to the earth. Feeling rather uneasy in my novel situation, I fired off my musket without taking any particular aim.

"The report was no sooner heard than the confusion amongst the hosts of these deer was indescribable. I began to be quite frightened at my close proximity to such overwhelming numbers. Had I ventured to rise, I should assuredly have been knocked over again by the force with which they rushed by. As it was, I remained perfectly quiet, and hundreds of them, in their fright

and agitation, cleared me at a bound. Never, my dear friend, since old Ireland was old Ireland, has been witnessed the like to this. The only thing at all approaching it, which I can remember, is a shindy at which I was once present at Donnybrook fair. The terror which had seized me, and the noise made by these numbers of deer, as they rushed past me, had wholly prevented my hearing the reports of the guns of my companions. As the sound of the retreat of the deer died away in the distance, we all arose from our hiding-places; and overjoyed was I to find, not far from me, my old friend with his antlers spread upon the ground, kicking and rolling about, with a hole right through his body. Close at hand, to my astonishment, I found a beautiful doe, quite dead, shot in her stomach, and I reasonably concluded from this that I had shot two birds with one stone. My companions, likewise, had been equally fortunate, and between us we found that we had managed to bag four fine deer. We now hastened to our caravan, and there was a general feast on the fruits of our day's sport.

"A few days afterwards, I felt desirous of having another turn, but the captain of the *Charetas* was peremptory as to our proceeding onwards without delay. On conversing with my two brother sportsmen, upon our strange adventures some days after, we all agreed that we had never seen anything like it before; and that the thorough disorganization of the numerous herds of deer, consequent upon the alarm we had given, from their fear of running foul of each other—the clatter of such a large number of horns, as they occasionally came into contact—the trampling of hoofs, and the rustling and tearing of the grass, together with the sight of these beautiful creatures, leaping over each other in their haste, formed as singular a scene, as it could, by possibility, be the lot of any one to witness."

This was my friend's account of a day's deer-stalking in South America; and the whole affair, though to others it may seem too highly coloured, is, to myself, who had now the opportunity of personal observation of the prodigious quantities of deer in these regions, perfectly intelligible. My readers

will bear in mind, that we had just arrived at Lescina Medran, when I broke the thread of my narrative, to tell them of the sporting wonders, of which this country can boast. This post presented at night much animation and bustle, whilst the soldiers were blowing their horns to call the small garrison to their quarters. The arrival of the coach, too, added spirit to the scene. Numbers of persons were selling their meat, fowl, eggs, and *choelos* as they found customers, and at the same time, filled the timid portion of their auditors with painful forebodings, as they detailed dismal stories of rapine and murder, committed by the *barbaros* in times gone by. We had, fortunately, profited by the application of the adage, "First come, first serve," and found ourselves comfortably refreshed by our evening's meal, and ready for repose, when the new arrivals were only just commencing to make their arrangements. It was not long before we were wholly oblivious of all around us, and wrapt in our soothing slumbers.

In the morning we started early, and in the course of the day we saw realized some

of those exciting scenes, which had been so vividly pictured before us on the preceding evening. The first post was Las Tres Cruces, presenting a number of small cottages, behind which was a stockade, formed of the prickly pear, ten or twelve feet high, and surrounded by a dry moat, in the shape of a long quadrangle. This place served as the nightly retreat of the whole village; and within, in a small building, were kept a number of guns and carbines, furnished by government for the defence of the post. On my arrival there, observing several women and children congregated to watch our progress, I made some inquiries of them, relative to the forays of the Indians. I soon learnt that scarcely a person in the place had escaped some calamity in the death of a relative, through the inroads and murderous propensities of these savages. One woman had seen her husband, brothers, and father, butchered before her eyes, and fainting at the sight, had been left for dead in the road. A man with whom I conversed, told me that during his absence, his wife and children had been taken away, and that he had not the slight-

est clue as to their whereabouts. My Gaucho, Pizarro, lost his father and mother, by their being consumed in their house, which had been set on fire by the Indians.

The men belonging to this village are generally occupied in guarding and tending their cattle; but one man, who had been left alone in care of the stockade, and as a protection to the females who were left, was suddenly attacked. Having arms and ammunition, he deliberately shot at the invaders, through holes in his entrenchment, and actually killed nine Indians as they galloped round the trenches, brandishing their long lances and uttering their discordant war-cries. After this fatal attempt, the Indians became alarmed, and hastily departed, carrying away their dead, thinking the place to be garrisoned with soldiers. Most of the little children that I beheld here had been reduced to orphanage by these terrible onslaughts of these savage tribes. It is reported that one of these tribes is headed by a European, a dissipated *desperado*, who never gives quarter to any of his countrymen. He is joined by the idle and the

profligate, and then these bands go forth on their errands of murder and plunder. The Indians invariably kill all the males that may chance to fall into their hands. The women, if young, are carried away by them, and become their wives. Sometimes even children are taken. It is stated, and I believe on very good authority, that several European or native women, on their way to join their husbands at Chili and other places, have been captured by these wretches, who have made them their wives and had children by them. One lady belonging to Chili, and said to have been a very beautiful white woman, shared the same fate, and became the mother of a family during her captivity. Her relations, who discovered the place of her confinement, opened negotiations with her captors for her release, offering a large sum of money as a ransom. The chiefs of the tribe gave her the option of returning to her friends, if she felt so disposed; but she positively refused the offer of her liberty, and remains to the present moment an Indian squaw.

I was informed by an officer who had lived

for some time amongst them, whilst negotiations between them and his Government were pending, that their life is one of great excitement and pleasure. They reside in a sort of encampment, and lead a kind of roving, gipsy life, almost *in puris naturalibus*. Hunting parties are continually made amongst them, with the full range of the plains to the very foot of the Cordilleras; and abundance of game, cattle, and fish supply all their wants.

The next post at which we arrived was called Il Frayle Muerto, and takes its name from some legend concerning a dead friar. Then we passed in succession that of Cancon, Barancas, and Saladilla; at which latter place, after a long day's journey, we put up for the night. These several posts possessed, more or less, the means of defence against a sudden surprise from the neigbouring Indians. The general mode adopted for this purpose seems to be to suround their fastnesses with moats; the minor defence being, as before stated, a hedge of prickly pears,—very insufficient fastnesses, were not the Indians so in dolent, and gifted with so little ingenuity. It is

said that these tribes, being accustomed from their earliest infancy to ride on horseback, are capable of doing very little when on foot, and they certainly exhibit little inclination for pedestrian exercise. At the post of Saladilla we all slept within one of the moats; but found a great paucity of creature comforts to keep up our courage—a small supply of eggs being all that we could obtain. Early on the following day, in reconnoitring the neighbourhood, I started a couple of foxes; but they were too quick for me, and I was unable to get a shot at them. The partridges, if possible, seemed here to be in greater profusion than ever.

At the posts of Lobaton and La Cabeza del Tigre, where we stopped to exchange horses, we found them to be unusually scarce, owing to so many of them having been taken away for the use of the cavalry. However, we were very fortunate, and had few impediments to arrest our onward journey. The post and village of La Cruz Alta, at which we next arrived, were all included within the precincts of their defences. Whilst our relays were being brought out and attached to

the carriage, the people came to us and offered for sale two small land tortoises, which were baked and turned out excellent. They likewise brought us some milk, which, with the aforesaid fare, would form a strange *melange* for a London exquisite; but "*à la guerre comme à la guerre,*" and thus, under the circumstances, myself and staff considered it a most delicious treat.

At the post of La Guardia de la Scena, we again rested for the night. This place is delightfully situated, and it is a pity that so beautiful a country should be almost entirely monopolised by savage tribes. The observation which I made in passing through the territories occupied by the Indians was, that they possessed the fairest portion of the land. Here the fine levels of the Pampas are free from the thistles which cover the plains in the vicinity of Buenos Ayres, and the quality of the pasture is unrivalled. It is, unfortunately, suffered to waste its unprofitable luxuriance till it perishes with decay, or is consumed by the parching heats of a tropical sun, to spring up again in the same rich and exuberant loveliness, to perish unheeded as

before. The terror inspired by the savage habits of the Indian tribes has wholly prevented the buildings of *haciendas*, or the pasturing of cattle in this locality; and the consequence is, that what otherwise would be a perfect paradise has now become, from the sheer want of cultivation and the industry of man, a wilderness where Nature's gifts are vainly lavished.

The next day brought us to the post of Arrequeto, and thence we passed to that of Desmuchados or Gallegos, where we found it necessary to come to a stand still, from the fact of one of the wheels of our coach having taken fire, and nearly burnt the box out. This delay was compensated by our being enabled to lay in a plentiful supply of meat, as well as a superabundant stock of partridges brought in by some boys for our benefit.

After leaving the post of Desmuchados or Gallegos, and at some considerable distance from it, the day being unusually clear and not a cloud to veil the piercing rays of a mid-day's sun, I perceived, all at once, far in advance of me, a cloud gradually spreading itself along the horizon, of a density so

opaque that it ultimately dimmed the brilliancy of the sun, and made it appear as if partially eclipsed. Thinking that, probably, it was an approaching *tornado*, I began to take the usual precautions against it, when one of my men informed me that the extraordinary effect I saw was produced by locusts. I immediately applied my glass to my eye, and could plainly distinguish myriads of these insects coming on towards us.

Our course lay through the very midst of the flight, and as they drew near each individual could be clearly recognised; the whole body of them forming what might be compared to a veil of gauze, through which the earth and sky were more or less obscured as it was wreathed like large volumes of smoke by every zephyr or gust of wind. When we got into the midst of them, they came down upon us like hail, the coach being literally covered with them, inside and outside. The earth and every object on it, every tree or blade of grass exhibited one living mass of these destructive insects. In size and appearance they resemble large grasshoppers, having four wings of a green

and red colour. It was a painful reflection to me when I considered that they were spreading their devastating presence over so large a district, leaving famine and desolation in their rear; and that the beautiful country, over which my eye now ranged, should, in the course of a few days, become a barren waste, and that the fruits of the labour so frugally exerted should be thus utterly destroyed. The time of their passing us in one dense and almost interminable cloud was at least two hours and a half, and estimating from this circumstance the extent of the ground which they covered, I should imagine that it must have been a tract of many square miles.

This insect has been known, on several occasions, to visit Monte Video, destroying every particle of herbage, and spreading themselves over the streets and houses till driven into the sea by some fortunate gale of wind. I have been told by persons who have witnessed this occurrence, that the sea at the time appeared as if covered with floating islands, and that when thrown upon the beach by the tide, their bodies had formed

such enormous heaps, that it had been found necessary by the public authorities to consume them by fire, to prevent the pestilential influence they would exercise by being suffered to decay.

As we advanced from this point the post-houses began to exhibit fewer precautionary arrangements, and the cattle and sheep were feeding at large upon the plain. On the ensuing day the posts of Mananteal and La Cadella de la Orketta furnished their supply of horses till the last post, that of La Cessilla Luna de Seston, brought us into the vicinity of the city of Il Rosario. Thistles now began to usurp the place of the fine grass crops of the Pampas. Numerous farms and tenements, cultivated fields and wild patches denoted that we were at a distance from the Indian territory, and that the boundary was far in our rear. Stretching along the banks of an important tributary of the mighty La Plata was seen the city of Il Rosario, and many neat houses newly built, as well as stores and shops, many of which were in course of erection, indicated for some distance the suburbs of this little port.

On entering it the streets and Plaza exhibited several good houses, and a neat-looking church, having two towers or belfrys. A grand hotel, to be undertaken by a Genoese, was on the point of being opened. I took up my abode at a Spanish *Posada* near the Plaza, and continued to make myself as comfortable there as circumstances would permit. After recruiting myself a little after my journey, I descended to the beach to take a general survey of the post, this town being built on a cliff some hundred feet above the river. A number of small craft, chiefly schooners commanded by Italians, engross the traffic of the place. The swampy state of the banks of the river and an abundant growth of vegetation engender so intolerable a number of musquitos, that I was fairly driven from the water's edge, and obliged to take refuge in the heights above, in order to rid myself of my tormentors.

There was a billiard-room in an hotel that was kept by a person from Gibraltar, who claimed to be a countryman of mine, calling himself an Englishman. Through the introduction of one of my fellow-travellers in the other coach, which arrived soon

after ours, I became acquainted with a most amiable family belonging to the town, at whose house we spent the evening together. Our kind host, who received us most cordially, had three interesting daughters, of whom two were single and the other a charming young widow. After various songs accompanied on the guitar, we took *maté* together according to the custom of the country, after which minuets, waltzes, and other dances formed the diversion of the evening, and we left much delighted with our entertainment, and the hospitality we had experienced.

The port of Il Rosario is famed for the daring of its inhabitants, in being the first to receive with open arms the combined forces of Brazil and General Urquiza, and to render their aid in the overthrow of the tyranny of Rosas. It was at this place that these combined armies disembarked to try the issue of their struggle which ended so successfully for the cause of liberty. I have no doubt that in the course of time it will become a city and port of some consequence, should the exploration of the great inland

rivers be followed up as proposed by the French, and the projected stations be finally established for a regular steam navigation into the interior of Peru and Bolivia.

The wheel of my carriage having been set to rights, and myself fleeced by an exorbitant Genoese for the services he had rendered me in so doing, I prepared for my departure. I had some difficulty in procuring horses; but I was determined to go by land in spite of the solicitations of several captains of schooners and some of my late *compagnons de voyage*, who were about to accompany them. The prospect of the crowded state of these small craft in the present instance, and a knowledge of the imperfect accommodation which they afforded, were quite sufficient to deter me from choosing that mode of transit; but the additional annoyances I should have had to encounter in an occasional contrary wind, detaining me in some creek or other to be half eaten up by my old enemies the musquitos, and half broiled under a scorching sun, made me not hesitate for a moment as to the conveyance I should choose. I now

engaged a new hand—a fine young fellow—to ride ahead of me and get ready the relays, so that on the arrival of the coach there should be no unnecessary delay. He did his part to perfection, and I found his services most valuable. At the time of leaving this place, the post was deficient in its usual supply of horses, so that I was obliged to hire some of a private individual in order to get over the first stage.

After passing the post of Pandos, we arrived at that of Pavon, where we took up our quarters for the night. The plains all along exhibited the young verdure of the season, as well as the withered remains of the thistles of the preceding year. During the summer, the plains in the vicinity of Buenos Ayres and for many leagues on the road to Mendoza are covered with fields of thistles, which grow to such a height that a man on horseback may easily be concealed amongst them. In the autumn their stalks become thoroughly dried by the heat of the sun, when they afford excellent fuel, and are used for that purpose. In the dry season they sometimes become ignited, and dreadful

indeed are the consequences, if the flames be stimulated by a gale of wind. The thousands of cattle which are feeding upon the plains become mad with fright, and run with impetuosity before the devouring element. Were it possible to behold this scene without personal danger, it would be the sublimest thing a traveller could witness; but, for my part, I am quite content to see it in imagination, and for my own sake, and that of others, can dispense with the awful reality.

We gained the post of Pasqual Belzara without loss of time, as horses were always ready awaiting our arrival; and in the course of this and the following day we made up for any delays to which we were subjected, by travelling at greater speed when once upon the road. In this way we passed the posts of Pas de las Holmas Portequello, Penualba, Canâda de Gomez, and Requa, resting for the night at the latter place. The posts had now become respectable farm-houses, well-built of brick, with well-furnished rooms, and well-attired domestics. The yards were filled with turkeys and poultry, which furnished

our daily meal, and a plentiful supply of meat was always to be obtained. On the next day we arrived at the bridge of San Antonio; but no one appearing to claim the toll, we passed on, skirting the town on our way. I noticed here several tame ostriches, with which the children were playing before the doors of the cottages, and many of them even riding on their backs. The road now became anything but agreeable by reason of a number of small rivers, streamlets, gullets, and watercourses, which intersected the plain. Many a Gaucho appeared in sight, making his way on horseback, at his usual half-gallop pace, to visit some neighbouring *hacienda*, or to attend one of the numerous village festivals which repeatedly take place.

At the next post of La Cana de Souci, we had to put up with worse horses than we had hitherto met upon the road. They broke down before we had proceeded very far, and we had the greatest difficulty in continuing our journey. This was the effect of the late war, which became more evident the nearer we approached to the capital. The cattle everywhere were perfectly ruined.

However, we managed to get on as far as La Canāda de la Cruz, where we proposed to remain for the night. All the way from Il Rosario, the plains had still presented vast herds of cows, calves, and oxen, together with thousands of sheep, with their numerous lambkins. The fresh morning air was, however, often tainted by an assemblage of the carcases of these animals, which had perished from various casualties, and which were left to putrify on the green sward, under the fierce rays of a burning sun. The last day before our arrival at the capital, we passed the posts of La Bella Lucan, La Canāda, Esquoard de Marchis, and Las Figuras.

Just as we left the latter place, the sun was sinking low in the horizon. The aspect of the sky had been very threatening throughout the day, and the dark, ominous cloud which had lowered in the horizon, had, by degrees, spread itself over the whole firmament. Not a breath of air was stirring, and a sulphurous vapour seemed to pervade the atmosphere. The whole face of nature was still, and not the motion of a blade of grass disturbed the painful silence. All at once

clouds of dust arose in the air, and obscured the whole heavens, and, travelling with terrific fury, rushed past us with overwhelming force. The hurricane had burst its leash, and plunging onward, roared along the plain and swept away everything that obstructed its course. Trees, roofs of houses, cattle—all were carried along in the vortex, and dashed with fury to the earth.

For a time the clouds of dust wholly prevented my distinguishing the form of any object. My ears were assailed on every hand by the appalling sounds which accompanied the destruction that was going on, but the force of the tempest and the dust which it raised, had entirely hindered my power of vision. Presently, however, I could discern my Gauchos, horses and *peones*, crouched down beneath sheds, or any place of shelter that happened to be at hand. After this the heavens opened, and a shower of fire descended on the earth, making the long extent of plain hiss and crackle, as it flickered along its course. Then a deluge of rain poured down, which continued unabated for some time, although the first fury of the tempest had long since passed over. In the midst of

this drenching shower, I came forward to summon my men, as I was determined to press onwards that night, in spite of all hindrances. They would fain have urged me to remain, but soon found that all remonstrance was useless, as I was most peremptory.

By dint of extra exertions, and the labour of extra horses and postilions, we contrived to drag the carriage through the large sheets of water continually to be met with, and which were the consequence of the incessant rain. Night had set in. After we had advanced for some distance, gardens, *quintas*, and small farms, began to line the road. We now knew that we were in the vicinity of some large city. Soon afterwards larger buildings appeared in sight, and then we found ourselves passing along streets in which shops and stores occurred at intervals. Then we crossed a market-place, crowded by numerous carts, which bring the meat from the country, and fruits and vegetables from the neighbouring *haciendas*. A church and a Plaza succeed. We had entered the important city of Buenos Ayres.

Thirty years before, I had already visited

this capital in furtherance of a claim which I had upon the Government of the country on behalf of my near relative, General Conte de Behague, in consequence of a contract made with him by the *Chargé d'Affaires* in England for military plans, fortifications, telegraphs, and military stores and equipments, as well as the general organization of the army. I had the pleasure, during my residence here at that time, to make the acquaintance of several agreeable families, and, amongst the rest, I was introduced to the amiable wife of General San Martin, the liberator of these provinces.

The city, as seen from the river, presents rather a monotonous aspect, from the similarity in point of height and general appearance of its buildings, which are here built upon the geometrical principle which is observed in most Spanish cities. Occasionally, however, domes, steeples, and observatories, break this painful regularity. The old fort, with its crazy walls, the entrance of which faces the Plaza, still exhibits its forbidding front in the direction of the sea. Around its bastions is a dry

ditch, which is crossed by means of a drawbridge, and the walls are still graced by some of those noted brass guns for which the Spaniards were once so famed. These command the angles of the fort, at one of which is a long esplanade, planted with trees, and provided with seats for the accommodation of pedestrians. This Alameda is well kept and regularly watered, and forms an agreeable resort, and a fashionable *paseo* or lounging-place for the inhabitants of the city. The quay is built of brick and stone, and offers a sufficient resistance to the encroachments of the water. This city is subject to visitations of the Pampero wind, which blows towards these shores without a moment's warning, driving before it an immense body of water, and flooding the sands for a distance of six or seven miles. I have heard that, before the construction of the quay, shipping of all kinds, from the largest man-of-war at a distance of nine miles from the coast, to the smallest craft that rode apparently in safety in the inner roads, were exposed to the severest accidents from the fury of this wind. A sudden fall

in the glass, or a distant cloud in the horizon, when, perhaps, the heavens were otherwise perfectly serene, were all the indications of the approaching hurricane; and then, in an indescribable short space of time, ships of all kinds would be driven from their moorings and carried over mountains of waves, till they reached the beach, where they would be crushed against each other, or even the very houses. The numerous wrecks with which at low-tide the sands are everywhere bestrewn, sufficiently attest the accuracy of these details.

The end of the Esplanade forms a delightful carriage-drive, and on the side towards the water there is an extensive and agreeable view of the river and outer roads, with their numerous shipping. Outside the beach, where, during low-water, an embankment of hard earth and rocky substances contains several basins and channels, the margins of which are covered with a mossy and velvety carpet, hundreds of negresses, engaged in their avocations as washerwomen, afford, by their gambols, songs, dances, and quarrels, continued amusement to the passers-by.

On the side towards the land, there is a succession of villas of graceful construction surrounded by beautiful gardens and pleasure grounds. A road has been formed at great expense for a distance of nearly four miles, to the delightful summer residence of General Rosas. It contains every convenience which the climate requires, and is laid out with the utmost taste and regard to comfort. The grounds are intersected by canals, and small lakes, on which are several small steamers and boats, which are kept for the amusement of the residents. In one part a neat-looking brig, which is well preserved and stands in the midst of a forest of trees, is used as a summer-house. The present inland situation of this residence was obtained during one of those dreadful irruptions of the water to which I have alluded. At the period of my visit it formed the head-quarters of General Urquiza, and the whole line of road between it and the city had become a regular encampment, the whole course being filled with cavalry, infantry, and artillery, and hosts of soldiers were dressed in the unsightly garb of Gaucho troops.

At this place, which was known by the name of Palermo, I had the opportunity of meeting with General Urquiza in company with a few friends. He had a very easy soldier-like bearing, and was remarkably gentlemanly; but, if report speaks true, he is, without exception, the severest commander who ever had the reins of power, suffering no act of insubordination, and punishing the delinquent in all cases with instant death.

The public edifices of this city have little in them to attract the attention of the curious. The churches, for the most part, exhibit that unfinished character so often to be met with in Italy and Spain, and the Cathedral itself is no exception to this rule. Externally it presents the pillared *façade* of a Roman temple, but its interior is utterly devoid of ornament, although its plain whitewashed walls give it an air of cleanliness and simplicity rarely to be found in Roman Catholic countries. However, on days of great observance a great display of crimson cloths and velvet, and an astounding show of plate, lent by the faithful for the occasion, entirely change its character. During my stay here a ludicrous scene took

place in the course of one of the nightly solemnities that take place in Passion week. The church, as usual, was crowded by females, and in accordance with the solemn occasion it was but sparingly lighted. A profound silence prevailed, and all seemed intent on their devotions, when some young men of the town, in rather too unseemly an exuberance of fun and frolic, put out the lights, and immediately fell to kissing the young ladies and knocking down the old ones. The consternation was dreadful, screams rent the air, and a general rush ensued, in which many were trodden under foot. Alarm was depicted upon every countenance, and the greater part knew not the cause of the awful scene of confusion and uproar which was going on. At last, tranquility was restored, and several arrests were made by the authorities. The sequel I never heard. It was afterwards affirmed by some that this was a *ruse* set on foot by some thieves in order to secure their booty in the confusion that ensued—others gave the version of the affair which I have done; but, at all events, in either case it does no credit to the parties concerned.

The palace built by General Rosas in the city as his residence, is deserving of notice for its solid construction and the beauty of its finish. This building occupies one block of a street, and comprises a number of squares or court-yards, with suites of apartments running into them, having verandahs forming a covered communication between them. Good English coach-houses and stabling give it a degree of comfort which seems seldom to be thought of in these localities. An elegant observatory and signal-towers with flat roofs form the principal features of this dwelling as seen from the outside. It was unfurnished when I saw it, probably from the fact of its having been but recently finished, or, as currently reported, from its having been sold by the existing government. On one side of the Plaza is a public building, in which, besides several smaller rooms deserving of notice, is one magnificent saloon which was used for a grand banquet and ball given by the citizens of Buenos Ayres in honour of General Urquiza, on the occasion of his triumphal entry into the city after the decisive battle that settled the fate of Rosas.

The grand Plaza is separated from a smaller

one by an arcade, where are a number of shops facing the fort. A row of posts and chains is the only thing to be found in the whole of this vacant space, betokening the great neglect of necessary improvements, and the want of ordinary embellishment which is so generally manifested throughout the Republic. The Cabeldo is characterized by the main guard of the police, consisting of a number of negro and Gaucho soldiers, who are always lying about or sleeping in the neighbourhood of the Plaza. The theatre, which was in the possession of a French *vaudeville* company, might be put on a footing with one of the most inferior establishments in London. The Hotel de Paris, at which I took up my quarters, is very large and commodious, as is the case with most of the establishments which are undertaken by the French; but it now appears very much neglected and almost deserted, and possesses little attraction for the stranger.

On the only elevation which commands the city there are military barracks and a parade. This was the position taken up by the ill-fated and imprudent General Whitelock, who could

from thence have easily bombarded the city, till it submitted to his will, without losing a man; but, instead of this, he made his attack through the streets, where each house, being flat-roofed, presented a regular fortification, and the armed inhabitants showered down from above such a host of missiles, and kept up such a deadly fire that the poor soldiers fell like corn before the sickle, causing the disgraceful capitulation which followed. These barracks having been constructed for the purpose for which they are now used, are the best in the place. The other quarters are generally formed in the dilapidated and deserted monasteries, formerly belonging to the Jesuits.

The English and foreign merchants residing in this city have established an English club-house, where a limited number of beds is provided for bachelor members. This fine establishment is conducted by a committee of gentlemen, and contains every possible convenience, including a reading and news-room, as well as one for billiards; and, in fact, economy, comfort, and every facility for commercial intercourse, have been consulted in all its arrangements. The foreign

population of this city includes a great number of shopkeepers, who form quite a little Paris of elegant shops. Hatmakers, tailors, *coiffeurs modistes*, and bootmakers predominate amongst the French; merchants, storekeepers, publicans, and boarding-housekeepers amongst the English; and amongst the Italians, warehousemen and captains of small craft trading to the inland ports on the mighty Plata.

The immigration of Irish to this place must have been on a very extensive scale, since all the hotel and boarding-houses, which are invariably European, have them in their employ. They are also to be found in great numbers on the farms in the neighbourhood of the capital, which are held by Englishmen, and which supply the city regularly with butter, eggs, and milk. The difficulty in finding a washerwoman is indescribable, and would scarcely be credited. I had to send my servant in all directions before he could find one, and then I discovered that I could enlist her in my service only on these conditions—first, that I should await her leisure, and next that I should pay at the rate of three or four royals for

each article! The market-place contains extensive accommodation in a number of distinct compartments, for meat, fish, vegetables, and fruits; and every variety of choice delicacy is to be procured, including an abundance of excellent fish upon all occasions, as well as a large supply of partridges and fowls. The Irish being so prevalent here, a large chapel attached to one of the churches was granted for their use, and an officiating priest belonging to the same nation provided, during the Rosas administration.

As I have had occasion repeatedly to refer to circumstances connected with the political affairs of this country, a few facts and details respecting the life and government of General Rosas may not be unacceptable to my readers. After the heroic delivery of his country from the Spanish yoke, the valiant General San Martin resigned the reins of government, and the consequence was, that a grasping ambition to wield the power of the State seized many of the leading families and military chiefs, who were divided into so many parties or heads of factions, each waging bloody and desperate war upon the others. The city of Buenos Ayres was thus continually subject

to a succession of *prononciamentos* and petty revolutions, tending to the insecurity of life and property. Two Presidents have been known to hold supreme power in the course of the same day, and one President was no sooner installed, than an antagonist arose to dispute his claim.

The terror and alarm caused by this state of things was paying very dearly for the independence which the States had gained, through the exertions and courage of their brave deliverer. Great and learned men, such as Rabadivea and Pintos, endeavoured to stem the torrent of those disorders which had been introduced by an unsettled state of society; but to no avail. The former of these I was personally acquainted with, and I may safely say that no man ever deserved more than he did the respect and devotion of all classes, and these he fully enjoyed. In the midst of all the confusion and anarchy which reigned in these parts; Rosas appeared, and with his Gaucho hordes of *Colorados*, or Reds, rushed in from the provinces like a whirlwind, obliterating all factions in a combined opposition to a common foe.

Having at last established himself in power,

he began systematically to crush the heads of other parties, and continued this course for a space of thirty years or so, until the whole country was perfectly overriden by his creatures. It is asserted that regular lists of persons and families, whom it was politic to put out of the way, were placed in the hands of these ferocious Gauchos, and that the commands of their superior were fully carried out at the nocturnal visits which they paid to their victims. A long list of this kind was found in the house of Rosas, after his defeat, containing the names of some hundreds of persons who were immediately to have been executed, had the result of the last battle been in his favour.

This determined tyrant built his power entirely on the support of the lowest of the people. Any pretensions of the nobility, or claims to popular notice on their part, were instantly discountenanced. At length some of the generals of this usurper, who thus held their power on so slight and deceitful a tenure, began all of a sudden to discover to what an insecure foundation they were trusting, and breaking from the bonds which

held them, joined with earnestness and enthusiasm the already formed party of the Unitarios, of which General Urquiza was the head. A treaty was soon set on foot with the Emperor of Brazil; and, succoured by so important an ally, they soon waged war with the oppressor, in a manner of which he had little dreamt. It has been often urged by Rosas, as an excuse for the many cruelties which he practised, that they were called for by the necessities of the case, and that he had no other way of keeping in subjection the turbulent and dissatisfied spirits with whom he had to deal. This severe and bloodthirsty man had a daughter, and it is pleasing to turn away from the contemplation of the many vices which disfigure his character to those beautiful traits of humanity and tenderness which distinguished hers. Maniseletta was loved and honoured by all; pity lurked within her soul, and every attribute of womanly feeling was there. This good creature, with tears and supplication, often prevailed with the harsh tyrant when other means were useless. At her entreaties, many a life was spared, and many a prayer of gra-

titude has ascended to heaven for the rescue of a father or a brother from his impending fate, at her kind interference.

General Urquiza and his allies who were under the command of Admiral Wingfield, the commanding officer under Lord Cochrane in the Brazilian navy, forced the passage of the river with little or no opposition. The men and artillery were landed near Il Rosario, and the detachments having pushed forward, fell in with a large body of troops belonging to Rosas, who were immediately engaged and put to flight. The main army, in the meantime, marched forward to attack a strongly fortified position on several hills, which was taken up by General Rosas, and well covered on all sides by a numerous body of artillery. These preparations were superintended by Rosas in person, and, it is said, on some observations being made by one of the best of his generals, as to the arrangements which had been made, he was immediately superseded. This unreasonable conduct is no doubt to be attributed to a mistrust which Rosas had, probably not without cause, of most of his leading men.

On the day of the battle he was indefatigable in visiting his various batteries, and reviewing his military preparations. General Urquiza and his allies made the attack in columns, under the fire of a hundred and fifty pieces of artillery, and although mowed down by grape and canister, these brave fellows still pushed forward and disputed every inch of the ground, till battery after battery fell into their hands. Rosas remained giving orders on one of the batteries which still was standing, till he plainly saw that all was lost, and then had the satisfaction of seeing one of his black myrmidons deliberately level his gun at him and fire. The shot, however, made but a slight wound in the hand, and this circumstance, as well as the general retreat, declaring now too evidently the fate of the day, the defeated commander slipped away in the confusion which followed, and made his escape to the city unobserved.

Soon afterwards, at the house of the British *Chargé d' Affaires*, a man presented himself and inquired of the *valet* for the Hon. R. Gore. The answer he received was that that gentleman was from home. The applicant, who wore a

poncho covered with dirt, with his face begrimed with gunpowder, and his hand bound up in a handkerchief, appeared faint and ready to sink, and showed great disinclination to leave the house. The valet, however, told him that his orders were peremptory not to suffer any stranger to enter the house. The person addressed then said, "I am General Rosas, will you let them shoot me in the streets like a dog?" At this appeal the valet admitted him immediately, took him into his own room, washed him, and after having supplied him with food, made him sleep for some hours upon his own bed. At night, dressed as a marine, the fugitive embarked in H.B.M. steamer the *Locust*, and soon found himself safe on board one of the Brazilian line of steamers bound for Southampton. Had he, by any chance, fallen into the hands of the people, he would inevitably have been torn in pieces, so great had now become the popular indignation against him.

Having made up my mind at last to start as soon as possible for England, I took my passage on board one of those large Mississippi boats

which have been sold to either a Brazilian or Buenos Ayres Company, and ply between the last mentioned port and Monte Video. The steamer, called *Il Rio de Janeiro*, afforded an excellent table and every needful accommodation to the passengers, and in the medley group which composed them, provided a never-failing fund of pleasure and amusement. The appearance of the city of Monte Video is most prepossessing. It is built on an eminence which forms a small peninsula, being washed on three sides by the sea, and from the various sea-breezes to which its situation exposes it, must be a very healthy spot. It is calculated to maintain an extensive commerce, and would, doubtless, long have enjoyed it, had not the vitality of the little Republic sunk under the obstinate persecution to which it was subjected by Rosas, in the person of his savage and overbearing Lieutenant Orebbe. This persecution lasted nine years or more, during which time the unfortunate city was exposed to a continual siege.

On the opposite side of the bay is a mound similar to that on which the city is built, and it was here that the hostile forces car-

ried on their operations. The harbour is safe, and generally crowded with shipping. The large men of war, of which a great number of all nations is always stationed here, take up their position at a distance from the port, seaward. At the time of my visit, the Brazilian fleet, under the command of Admiral Wingfield, was in the offing. Notwithstanding the devastating effects of war, this city, Phœnix-like, is again rising from her ashes. Lines of bastions and batteries are daily giving place to scenes of commercial enterprise and agricultural activity. The husbandman labours with his ploughshare and his sickle, where deadly engines of war once vented forth their flames. Streets lined with new and extensive buildings are to be met with at every turn. Elegant French shops attract the eye, as their well stored windows exhibit the beautiful fabrics of European manufacture. So great is the number of foreigners who are domiciled in the city, that it has quite the appearance of a colony of strangers, the natives of the country forming but a small proportion of the entire population. The

Basques predominate. After that the Italians take the lead. Little good has been effected by the maintenance of a foreign legion for so long a time, under the auspices of the celebrated Italian leader, Garibaldi. The present troops of the Republic are the emancipated negroes, officered by native whites.

In the grand Plaza stands the cathedral, a large edifice of a commanding exterior, although internally its arrangements partake of great simplicity. On occasions of great solemnity, however, the decorations and ornaments of the church are on a scale of great magnificence. The Hotel de Ville is a ponderous unfinished building, and contains the police-station and various shops and stores, together with the Hotel de Paris kept by a French cook, who at one time belonged to a French vessel of war. For the accommodation of a few rooms and board for three persons, I was charged here at the rate of a doubloon a day. There are several other hotels in the city. That of Il Comercio bears a good repute. The whole place, including its suburbs, literally swarms with

cafés and *estaminets*. That of the Bal d'Oro, which is a large establishment near the quay, carries off the palm, and is much frequented by the officers of the French navy. The various dwelling-houses are provided with flat roofs, and these, combined with a number of observatories, which are the constant resort of the inmates, give the city a lively and agreeable aspect.

The market-place, which formerly formed a part of the old fort or citadel in the time of the Spaniards, is well supplied with every species of provisions. Its display of fish far surpasses that of Buenos Ayres, both as regards variety and quality. In the course of my rambles about the town, I could plainly trace the ravages of war, particularly in the suburbs, where all the houses, trees, or walls, likely to impede the advance of an enemy, had evidently been intentionally thrown down. The entrance to the town, landwards, had been protected by a large battery, erected on heavy beams of wood, faced with brick-work, and furnished with casements, which had been erected at the expense of the foreign merchants, and super-

intended by a British naval officer. During the siege the inhabitants of the place often took walks with their families as far as this fort, when the enemy generally commenced a fire of twenty-four pounders, out of range, so that the spent shot came rolling into the road, and afforded excellent sport to the little boys and idlers in the neighbourhood.

The English houses of commerce seem to hold the supremacy in the wholesale trade; those of other nations, perhaps, in the retail. I noticed a beautiful building, highly decorated, which, I was informed, was destined to be a house of amusement like that of the gas-lights at Hamburg, and would include music and dancing, and bodily refreshments, in its bill of fare. I visited also a small and insignificant *café*, kept by a Frenchman, called the Museum of Arts and Curiosities. The proprietor I found to be a man of vast intelligence, having in his possession paintings and engravings of great value, and coins of the utmost rarity and antiquity, together with sundry other curiosities, which in Europe would fetch a great value. I learnt from this man that, during the course of the

siege, and before the erection of the large battery above mentioned, many soldiers belonging to the invading army used to steal out on dark nights into the suburbs, and murder the poor unoffending citizens thus taken by surprise.

The city possessed amongst its other attractions a theatre, at which, at the time of my visit, an Italian company was performing *Norma*, Mademoiselle Ida Edelviza being the *prima donna*. The Government seems to be highly unpopular, and probably will not hold together for any length of time. As a maritime and commercial port, Monte Video holds a very desirable position, and will, doubtless, before long supersede Buenos Ayres, as the first port on the coast for the disembarkation of goods for the internal consumption of the country. The effects of the cessation of hostilities begin already to be seen in a great outlay of capital; and in the course of a few years, when commercial relations are on a better basis, and security to life and property is better insured, this city will rise into greater mercantile importance than any other in this part of the New World.

I now bade adieu to South America, to carry with me to England the reminiscences of the pleasure I had experienced, and the dangers I had encountered, whilst travelling through its extensive territories. There has been for many years a direct communication between the ports of Genoa and Monte Video, facilitating that tide of Italian immigration which, judging by the numbers of Italians to be met with in many parts of the country, must of late years have been very considerable. Hearing of the sad ravages made by the yellow-fever at Rio de Janeiro, and as time was no object to me, I took my passage in a sailing vessel to the former port; and in a Genoese brig, commanded by Captain Gastalde, as kind and worthy a man as ever breathed, I was landed safely in London, after a propitious and agreeable passage.

THE END.

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